

# DRAFT Utah PYs 2020-2023

## Contents

### Utah PYs 2020-2023

#### Overview

Options for Submitting a State Plan

How State Plan Requirements Are Organized

#### I. WIOA State Plan Type and Executive Summary

a. WIOA State Plan Type

Combined Plan Partner Program(s)

b. Plan Introduction or Executive Summary

#### II. Strategic Elements

a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

b. State Strategic Vision and Goals

c. State Strategy

#### III. Operational Planning Elements

a. State Strategy Implementation

b. State Operating Systems and Policies

#### IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs

#### V. Common Assurances (For All Core Programs)

#### VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs

Program-specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B

Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services)

Program-specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs

Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (Combined or General)

#### VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

#### Performance Indicator Appendix

All WIOA Core Programs

Additional Indicators of Performance

#### Other Appendices

## Overview

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Governor of each State must submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor that outlines a four-year strategy for the State's workforce development system. The publicly-funded workforce development system is a national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all job-seekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. States must have approved Unified or Combined State Plans in place to receive funding for core programs. WIOA reforms planning requirements, previously governed by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), to foster better alignment of Federal investments in job training, to integrate service delivery across programs and improve efficiency in service delivery, and to ensure that the workforce system is job-driven and matches employers with skilled individuals. One of WIOA's principal areas of reform is to require States to plan across core programs and include this planning process in the Unified or Combined State Plans. This reform promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each State and fosters development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as career pathways and sector strategies, for addressing the needs of businesses and workers. Successful implementation of many of these approaches called for within WIOA requires robust relationships across programs. WIOA requires States and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through Unified or Combined State Plans.

## Options for Submitting a State Plan

A State has two options for submitting a State Plan— a Unified State Plan or a Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for the core programs. The six core programs are—

- the Adult program (Title I of WIOA),
- the Dislocated Worker program (Title I),
- the Youth program (Title I),
- the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II), and
- the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program (authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III),
- the Vocational Rehabilitation program (authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV).

Alternatively, a State may submit a Combined State Plan that meets the requirements described in this document and outlines a four-year strategy for WIOA's core programs plus one or more of the Combined State Plan partner programs. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the "common planning elements" (Sections II-IV of this document) where specified, as well as the program-specific

requirements for that program where such planning requirements exist separately for the program. The Combined State Plan partner programs are—

- Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))
- Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.)
- Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)
- Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)) <sup>1</sup>
- Reintegration of Ex-Offenders program (programs authorized under section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532))

[1] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that are included would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

## How State Plan Requirements Are Organized

The major content areas of the Unified or Combined State Plan include strategic and operational planning elements. WIOA separates the strategic and operational elements to facilitate cross-program strategic planning.

- The **Strategic Planning Elements** section includes analyses of the State's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for the State's workforce development system and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth.
- The **Operational Planning Elements** section identifies the State's efforts to support the State's strategic vision and goals as identified in the Strategic Planning Elements section. This section ensures that the State has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include:
  - State Strategy Implementation,
  - State Operating Systems and Policies,
  - Assurances,
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Core Programs, and
  - Program-Specific Requirements for the Combined State Plan partner programs. (These requirements are available in a separate supplemental document, Supplement to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements. The Departments are not seeking comments on these particular requirements).

When responding to Unified or Combined State Plan requirements, States must identify specific strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.<sup>2</sup> States must develop strategies that look beyond strategies for the general population and develop approaches that also address the needs of target populations.

**Paperwork Reduction Act:** The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) provides that an agency may not conduct, and no person is required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to be 86 hours per state; including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Responding to this collection is required to obtain or retain the Federal grant benefit. In addition, responses to this information collection are public, and the agencies offer no assurances of confidentiality. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workforce Investment, and reference OMB control number 1205-0522. Note: Please do not return the completed plan to this address.

[2] Target populations include individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3, as well as veterans, unemployed workers, and youth.

## I. WIOA State Plan Type and Executive Summary

### a. WIOA State Plan Type

**Unified or Combined State Plan.** Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs. Unified or Combined State Plan. Select whether the State is submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan. At a minimum, a State must submit a Unified State Plan that covers the six core programs.

**Unified State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.

**Combined State Plan.** This plan includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs, as well as one or more of the optional Combined State Plan partner programs identified below.

This is a unified plan

## Combined Plan Partner Program(s)

Indicate which Combined Plan partner program(s) the state is electing to include in the plan.

Career and technical education programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)

No

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)

No

Employment and Training programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)))

No

Work programs authorized under section 6(o) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(o))

No

Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers programs (activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.))

No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.)

No

Unemployment Insurance programs (programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws in accordance with applicable Federal law)

No

Senior Community Service Employment program (programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.))

No

Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

No

Community Services Block Grant (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.))

No

## b. Plan Introduction or Executive Summary

The Unified or Combined State Plan may include an introduction or executive summary. This element is optional.

### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The vision of WIOA is to achieve and maintain an integrated, job-driven workforce system that links our diverse, talented workforce to U.S. businesses and improves the quality of life for citizens. This is accomplished by:

- The needs of businesses and workers driving workforce solutions
- The workforce system supporting strong regional economies
- One-Stop/American Job Centers providing first-rate customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses

This is reflected in WIOA's overarching goals:

- Increase access to education, training and employment, particularly for vulnerable populations and people with barriers to employment
- Create a comprehensive, high-quality workforce by aligning workforce investment, education and economic development
- Improve the quality and labor-market relevance of workforce investment, education and economic development efforts.
- Promote improvements in the structure and delivery of services
- Increase the prosperity of workers and employers
- Reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet employer needs and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the nation

### Utah's Vision

A strong economy, now and in the future, depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will enhance and expand collaborative efforts with businesses and organizations, educational institutions, community partners, and government agencies through business development and partnerships related to key industry sectors and occupations. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to

and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

### Partners

The role of the core partners is to ensure services are coordinated, aligned, and complementary so job seekers can acquire the skills and credentials that meet employer needs.

Core partners include:

- Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Youth Program
- Wagner-Peyser Act programs
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs

Utah's WIOA partners are responsible for workforce and economic development through the collaboration of programs, initiatives, and services that create a seamless, customer-focused one-stop delivery system. Utah's required partners collaborate and align their services to enhance access for job seekers and businesses.

Required partners include:

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Veterans job counseling, training and placement services
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities
- Unemployment Compensation programs
- Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, Part A (TANF)
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program

### Statewide Input

Utah's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), through the work of its committees, led the development of Utah's Unified Plan and the 2022 revision. The board members directly participated in the development of Utah's vision and goals providing the base for the strategies, activities and services outlined in the plan. Input for the plan was solicited from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, local government, employers and elected officials. Utah's two year update for its plan was presented at six town hall meetings throughout the state, and available online for public comment. Utah's State Workforce Development Board and agency partners have worked closely together to implement the goals from the 2016 plan. The relationships and connections that have



been built during the past six years influenced the development of the 2022 revision. All partners have developed a clear understanding of their roles and how they can work together to continually improve services and have a positive impact on Utah's workforce system.

### Strategic Plan

Utah's plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships and its resources to implement strategies that support operations in providing services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's workforce partners receive annual updates about Utah's economic condition.

Workforce development activities include:

- Identifying targeted industry sectors and occupations; aligning programs and services to support them; and ensuring involvement from business and education partners
- Setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information and data and working together to resolve problems and address gaps
- Collaborating and coordinating training, marketing and feedback
- Utilizing existing committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate
- Holding regular SWDB and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan

## II. Strategic Elements

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a Strategic Planning Elements section that analyzes the State's current economic environment and identifies the State's overall vision for its workforce development system. The required elements in this section allow the State to develop data-driven goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and to identify successful strategies for aligning workforce development programs to support economic growth. Unless otherwise noted, all Strategic Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs.

### a. Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions, economic development strategies, and labor market in which the State's workforce system and programs will operate.

#### 1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

##### A. Economic Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the State, including sub-State regions and any specific economic areas identified by the State. This must include—

### **i. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

### **ii. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

### **iii. Employers' Employment Needs**

With regard to the industry sectors and occupations identified in (A)(i) and (ii), provide an assessment of the employment needs of employers, including a description of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

#### **(a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis**

Utah's strategic plan and vision are based on analysis of the state's pre-pandemic economy and workforce. We view the pandemic as a temporary interruption for Utah's economy. We do not foresee the pandemic altering the underlying trend variables that have influenced the Utah economy through its recent economic history. We do see some structural changes remaining from the pandemic, like an increased amount of teleworking, but they do not significantly alter the need for and distribution of occupations. It will change the location of a work environment, but not necessarily the functions expected from the work environment.

This plan is anchored to Utah's pre-pandemic economic characteristics. Utah has experienced a strong economic rebound from the pandemic and is rapidly returning to its pre-pandemic defining economic characteristics. The pre-pandemic trend characteristics approach, therefore, serves as the basis for developing data-driven goals designed to prepare Utah's workforce to thrive and support the anticipated economic growth as illustrated by Utah's trend accomplishments.

Utah identifies four major economic areas within the state: the Wasatch Front (Utah's principal urban area), the Bear River Area, the Eastern Region, and the Central/Southwest Area. The latter three have enough distance or dissimilarity from Utah's urban core to warrant their own regional identifications.

Since 83 percent of the state's employment is embodied in the Wasatch Front, the overall state profile serves as a proxy for the profile of that urban core. Analysis is provided for the other three areas where appropriate.

#### **(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis**

##### Economic Summary

Utah's economy operated as a full-employment economy leading up to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finding adequate quantities of labor was a challenge. Finding labor, though an effort, appeared to be manageable. The demand/supply relationship was tight, but the two forces were not dramatically apart.

The pandemic emerged and interrupted Utah's full-employment trend. Initial Utah COVID-19 job losses amounted to a 7.7 percent setback; a significant decline but the lowest job-loss percentage across all states. The Utah economy was largely "closed" throughout all of April 2020, but was reopened on a limited basis as early as May 2020. This re-opening, ahead of many other states, benefited Utah's economy by more rapidly re-engaging commerce and allowing Utah to commence one of the nation's best state-economic rebounds. By the time 2020 ended, Utah had experienced only a 1.3-percent job loss across the year. The year's unemployment rate average was 4.7 percent after a high of over 10 percent when COVID-19 hit.

During 2021, Utah's economy continues to create new jobs and steadily reopen formerly pandemic-restricted jobs. The economy's overall job count is higher than the magnitude achieved prior to the pandemic.

By the end of spring 2021, a collective mindset emerged that the pandemic had run its course. Therefore, previously impacted industries reopened in full—at least that was their desire. With this rapid, collective commerce reopening came an instantaneous demand for labor. One would have assumed that labor would be available as the pandemic idled many workers. But any rapid labor return to the workplace has been a frictional and slow process. Because of that, a large gap has developed between the demand for labor and a curtailed response by labor toward that need.

We surmise this gap will work toward an eventual equilibrium, although it may be a slow and somewhat arduous task. It will be the defining characteristic through the remainder of 2021, and will probably not equalize until well into 2022. The expectation is a return to full employment and an environment like before the pandemic with a strong need for labor.

### Economic Outlook

Evidence indicates that Utah's economic position is favorable and forwardly optimistic. It has shown itself to be one of the nation's best performing state economies across the past 30 years. There are internal and external drivers of this performance and both are expected to remain as primary Utah economic influences moving forward.

The internal factor is that Utah has the nation's highest birth rate. Utah's internal demographics do not mirror the national trends. The national profile has the baby boom generation as a major portion of the labor force, and that segment will be exiting during the next 20 years. Behind that is a dearth of incoming labor because of low birth rates. The nation is rapidly approaching zero labor force growth because of this demographic deficiency. Utah, on the other hand, across the next 20 years can largely age two children into its labor force for every one baby boomer who leaves the labor force. This demographic statistic is Utah's internal economic driver.

The external support is centered around Utah's geographic location. Utah is located in the middle of America's strongest in-migration region; the relatively underpopulated Rocky Mountains. For most of the United States' historical development, the mountain states were sparsely populated as mountains were a barrier during the Industrial Revolution's economic progression. Flat land, rivers, lakes and oceans were assets for that era's industrial output's distribution. Mountains, on the other hand, presented a challenge. Then, post-WWII industrial advancements helped find ways around these obstacles. Additionally, and more forcefully, the emergence of the technology economy has completely broken through this barrier. Those mountains that previously presented an economic barrier have now shifted to presenting an economic attraction. Across the past 30 years, four states have seen their economies grow by 100 percent or more. They are Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, and Utah; all Intermountain West states. There is a collective economic synergy surrounding this region, and Utah lies at the center.

### Economic Overview

When the pandemic hit, Utah had just entered its tenth consecutive year of economic expansion following the Great Recession. Many of those prior years had been characterized with at or above average (3.0 percent or higher) annual employment growth. Unemployment had trended downward from a Great Recession high of 8.0 percent to a pre-pandemic 2.5 percent. The rate had been below 3.5 percent during the prior three years. In other words, Utah had been operating on a full-employment economy for multiple years.

The post-Great Recession Utah labor force participation rate, (the percent of all persons ages 16 and older who are either working or looking for work), is naturally declining. In Utah, the rate was around 72 percent for the 20 years prior to the Great Recession. The participation rate lowered to 67 percent during the recession as workers became discouraged or disassociated from the weakened job market. Yet over the past 10 years, as the economy has significantly improved, the participation rate has incrementally risen to only 68.5 percent. The natural aging of the population is the force behind Utah's lower participation rate. Prior to the Great Recession, only 11 percent of Utah's 16+ population was 65 years and older—that being a segment of the 16-and-over population that naturally has a low participation rate. With that age group's percentage increasing to 16 percent of the 16 and older population by 2020, the Utah labor force participation rate's potential can only attain a level of 68.5 percent and not a return to a 72 percent level.

Utah's employment-expansion industrial distribution is as broad as it is strong. Mining is largely the only sector with a less than rosy outlook going forward. The oil and gas segments ebb and flow with that industry's seemingly perpetual volatility. The coal industry is on a much less volatile, but determined path downward. The utilities and public administration sectors have grown minimally. The remaining industrial sectors have grown significantly across the five years leading up to the pandemic, ranging from 7 percent for wholesale trade to 47 percent for construction. A sector like manufacturing, nationally considered to be in decline, expanded its Utah employment footprint by 13 percent.

Utah has experienced the same urban-centric post-Great Recession expansion experienced nationally. Utah has an urban-dominated economy as 92 percent of the state's employment is found within its metropolitan statistical areas (including Logan and St. George).

Utah's rural areas have not experienced the same degree of economic expansion. As a whole, Utah's rural areas generated strong job growth only during the two years leading up to the pandemic. Prior to that, growth was tepid and at times non-existent.

## Regional Profiles

### Bear River Area

The Bear River Area comprises Box Elder, Cache, and Rich counties along the state's northern border. It makes up 5.4 percent of Utah's employment base. Cache County has the largest employment base in the area and is the main core of the Logan Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that includes Franklin County, Idaho. Cache County makes up 74 percent of the Bear River Area's employment base.

Box Elder County is a part of the Ogden-Clearfield MSA. It composes 25 percent of the Bear River Area's employment base. Rich County is a small, rural county that includes one percent of the Bear River Area's employment base.

The Bear River Area contributes to the states' overall strong economic environment. The employment base has grown by 3.1 percent over the two years before the pandemic, and 12.4 percent in the five years before the pandemic.

An economic feature of this area is its significant manufacturing presence. Manufacturing makes up 22 percent of the area's employment. While manufacturing is somewhat of a declining industry at the national level, this region's manufacturing employment has increased by 67 percent over the five years pre-pandemic. Since this area also has a strong agricultural presence, much of the manufacturing employment is in food production, a segment of manufacturing that tends to be more stable than non-food manufacturing.

The education sector is another significant employer, accounting for 16 percent of the employment base. Utah State University, an agricultural-founded university, is the backbone of this employment. Healthcare, retail trade, and leisure and hospitality round out the other top employment sectors. Across 16 major industry sectors, only the information and public administration sectors have lost jobs in this area over the five years pre-pandemic.

The economic impact from the pandemic was somewhat tempered in this economic region. Manufacturing, a significant portion of this region's employment base, was not heavily impacted by the pandemic. In fact, manufacturing employment actually increased a bit during the pandemic. Food manufacturing is significant in this region, and that is largely the reason manufacturing did not slide during the pandemic.

### Eastern Region

Utah's Eastern Region spans the north-south axis mostly along the border with Colorado. It is a seven-county conglomeration whose commonality is geographic isolation from Utah's urban center. It has vast areas of uninhabited land, extensive public land ownership, several Native American

reservations, stunning landscapes yielding national parks, monuments and recreation areas, and a general lack of industrial diversity.

The area has two micropolitan centers; Vernal, in the geographic area called the Uintah Basin, and Price near the center of the state. Moab is another town that serves as the regional center for the area's southeastern corner.

While the geography spans nearly half the state, the Eastern Region makes up 2.7 percent of Utah's employment base. This is down from 3.2 percent five years pre-pandemic. The strong overall Utah economic growth in that interval does not seem to have reached this area. The area's employment count decreased by 5.6 percent in those five years.

The overall losses are largely attributed to the energy sector. Oil, natural gas, and coal production are significant economic features. The Uintah Basin segment, centered in Vernal, produces oil and natural gas. Its employment count is down 13 percent across the pre-pandemic five years. Not only mining, but construction and trucking employment are down as these industries are linked to, and support, the region's energy production.

The Eastern Region's Castle Country segment, spanning Carbon and Emery counties and the city of Price, continues to be a coal and electricity-production economy. The five years prior to the pandemic saw the overall employment level decline by around 200. This is not particularly weak since coal mining and coal-burning power plants have not been on a favorable trajectory given the escalating concerns related to climate change.

The region's two southern counties, Grand and San Juan, are heavy tourist-dependent economies. The COVID-19 pandemic has treated each differently. Grand County is home to two national parks and is more easily accessed than San Juan County. San Juan is less known and visited because its landscape has only recently been designated as a national monument. Visitor centers and corresponding infrastructure are not in place as a draw, and major highways are far away. Therefore, Grand County has rebounded significantly from its initial pandemic restrictions, but San Juan County has not.

Overall, the leisure and hospitality industry (a proxy for tourism) is the region's dominant employment focus with 12.7 percent of employment. It is not a particularly well-paying industry and the employment is often seasonal. But it is vibrant. Retail trade accounts for another 12 percent of employment and works in concert with the tourism activity. Healthcare and education each account for 11 percent of the region's employment base. These tend to be stable and exhibit less seasonal employment as their clientele is largely the local population. Due to the area's national parks and monuments, the public administration sector has an outsized, but positive presence of 10 percent of the employment base.

The region's mining employment trend is noteworthy. Prior to COVID the mining industry accounted for 13 percent of the region's employment base. Declines in employment in this industry during the prior five years have dropped it to 9 percent. Most of this occurred within the Uintah Basin's oil patch.

The employment decrease is primarily due to transitory workers who follow work across the nation's oil patches, so many of the dislocated workers do not remain in the region.

The pandemic did negatively impact this region. The initial shutting down of the movement of people largely brought the oil industry to a standstill. This shutdown the oil patch of the Uintah Basin, and it is only recently springing back to life. The coal country in the area's central portion was relatively untouched by the pandemic. The area's two southern counties are heavily tourist dependent. For the first several months, the pandemic virtually closed these economies. When people began traveling by car to the national parks, things changed from good to bad, particularly in Grand County. Again, San Juan County's isolation played against it as it did not see the tourism volumes that Grand did. It is still waiting to see a full rebound.

### Central/Southwest Region

Utah's Central/Southwest Region spans a large portion of geographic Utah, consisting of the state's center southward to the Arizona border, along with a middle-to-southern portion of the western half of the state bordering Nevada. It consists of 10 counties and includes the St. George MSA and the Cedar City Micropolitan Statistical Area. Apart from these cities, the remainder is extensively rural, but it does have four regional communities including Delta, Kanab, Richfield, and Ephraim. Like the Eastern Region, a commonality is isolation from Utah's metropolitan heart, vast areas of uninhabited land, extensive public land ownership, three national parks, national monuments and recreation areas, and a general lack of industrial diversity (except for the St. George MSA).

The region comprises 8.0 percent of the state's employment base, up from 7.3 percent in 2014. The area has shared in the state's strong employment growth of the past five years, largely but not exclusively from the strength of the St. George MSA (Washington County). This is one of the nation's fastest-growing counties. Its warm, sunbelt climate and desert red rock scenery are major attractions.

The region's economy grew by 3.8 percent over the two years preceding the pandemic, and 20 percent over the five years before that. The growth is primarily in the region's southwestern portion, but the mostly rural central portion is faring better than the neighboring rural Eastern Region because it does not rely on the volatile energy-sector.

Leisure and hospitality (tourism) is the region's leading industry, comprising 23.0 percent of the employment base. Paralleling that is another 21.0 percent in retail trade employment. Healthcare (21.0 percent) and education (17.0 percent) are also large employment areas, with an additional strong presence in construction (13.0 percent).

The St. George MSA accounts for 58.0 percent of the region's employment base. The Cedar City micropolitan area adds another 17 percent. Together they account for 75.0 percent of the region's employment base. The St. George MSA employment expanded by 25.0 percent in the five years prior to the pandemic, and the Cedar City micropolitan by 27.0 percent.

The pandemic had mixed effects upon this area. Tourism initially shut down the area during the pandemic's first three months, then it came roaring back. With its close proximity to California, the

region's natural beauty and national parks, the nation's domestic travelers came to this region in large droves.

### **(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

#### **Industry Demand**

Industry demand in Utah is broad based because employment growth has occurred across all industrial sectors, with the exception of the mining industry. In evaluating 122 industrial sectors within Utah, only 17 contracted employment during the pre-pandemic five years.

For industries that have expanded employment, several prominent sectors are related to construction. This coincides with Utah's strong economic expansion. However, construction can be volatile when the economy softens. This industry is more sensitive to the ups and downs of the business cycle than many other sectors.

Healthcare has its share of industry units represented among the best performers. As the population increases, healthcare expansion is a natural consequence. Computer sectors also have a strong presence. The national post-Great Recession technology expansion is very urban-centric, as the young labor force that fuels it seems to prefer an urban setting. Since Utah is highly urbanized, it naturally follows that Utah would have a healthy and vibrantly expanding technology sector.

#### **Occupation Demand**

The occupational mix is somewhat different from industries. There is more churning and dynamics within the occupational spectrum. Occupations are found throughout the industries and are more numerous than the industries. While an industry may be shedding particular types of occupations, it may be making gains through other occupations.

When evaluating 549 occupations in Utah in the five years prior to COVID, there are 219 with lower employment than five years ago. That leaves 330 with increases. Across the 22 major occupational classifications, only office and administrative support had less employment, by around 21,000 jobs. Much of this displacement is related to automation.

While the construction industry is growing in Utah, it does not mean individual construction-related occupations cannot be declining. This is the case with production occupations within Utah's growing manufacturing sector.

One theme emerging for most declining occupations in Utah is that they require only a basic amount of education—not particularly requiring high levels of advanced education or training. This makes it expedient upon public workforce agencies to be aware of such declines and to caution those they serve and advise about such occupations.

The following list of occupations have increased their employment base by 3,000 or more positions across the pre-pandemic five years.



### List of Highest-Growth Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
41-4012	Sales Reps, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Exclude Tech. and Scientific
47-2111	Electricians
41-2031	Retail Salespersons
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
11-3031	Financial Managers
51-9199	Production Workers, All Others
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
15-1256	Software Developers, Analysts, and Testers
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialist
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers
53-3033	Light Truck Drivers
29-1141	Registered Nurses

### Regional Analysis

#### Bear River Area

##### Industry Demand

The area's strong employment growth has created an array of industries that are currently in demand. There are only a handful that have lost employment over the pre-pandemic five years including printing, chemical, and miscellaneous manufacturing. Large gains in food manufacturing, transportation equipment, plastics, and fabricated metals have countered these losses.

Professional and technical services are making gains in the region. Scientific research and information technologies are expanding, largely in the Logan MSA.

The region's economic growth is also spurring construction gains, particularly among the specialty trades like carpentry, framing, painting, HVAC, and electrical.

Education employment is trending upward, at both the university and K-12 levels as the population increases.

#### Occupation Demand

Given that nearly 40 percent of the area's employment is found in manufacturing and education, it is not surprising that much of the occupational distribution is centered around these two industries. The area has a higher than average occupational presence (based on location quotients) in the production and education occupations. Both have added new employment over the past several years.

Areas with average or slightly above average occupational presence include management occupations, life, physical and social sciences, sales occupations, office and administrative support, construction and installation, maintenance and repair occupations. All have added jobs over the past several years, with the exception of office and administrative support.

One area where the region does not have a strong occupational presence is in the computer and mathematical occupations. It has actually shed jobs over the past several years. Architecture and engineering jobs have also declined in the area.

The following list includes occupations that have increased their employment base by 200 or more positions across the pre-pandemic five years.

#### List of Highest-Growth Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
25-9041	Teacher Assistants Secondary School Teachers
25-2031	Education
41-2031	Retail Salespersons
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders
35-2014	Restaurant Cooks
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses

53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand
39-9011	Childcare Workers
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shops
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives

### Eastern Region

#### Industry Demand

The overall five-year slump in employment growth means more industry groups have contracted employment than have gained. As mentioned, the losses are largely found in the region's energy-producing areas. Therefore, industrial losses are concentrated in the energy industry or those industries that support energy production. These include mining, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation.

The industry areas producing gains are led by education and healthcare, two industries closely associated with the local population and whose performance is largely immune from the area's economic upheavals. Educating children and taking care of one's health does not stop when the economy goes bad.

Other sectors showing growth are related to the leisure & hospitality industry, which plays a significant part in the southern portion of the area's economy.

#### Occupation Demand

The region had overall employment loss across the pre-pandemic five years, but much of this occurred in the oil-producing Uintah Basin region. There are more occupations that have gained employment than those that have lost; but the handful of occupations that contracted lost a lot of employment.

Noted gains are categorized within office and administrative support, personal care and service occupations, food preparation and serving related occupations, sales and related, transportation and material moving, and educational instruction.

The following list includes occupations that have increased their employment base by 250 or more positions across the pre-pandemic five years.

#### List of Highest-Growth Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
---------	---------------------------------

41-2031	Retail Salespersons
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
41-2011	Cashiers
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
25-9041	Teacher Assistants
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers
41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors
39-9032	Recreation Workers
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers
39-9011	Childcare Workers

#### Central/Southwest Region

Industry Demand

Due to the region's robust employment growth, led largely by the St. George area, nearly all industrial sectors have added jobs. The lone exceptions are wholesale trade and utilities which are not large industry sectors in this area.

Given St. George's expanding economy resulting from, or causing, a rapid population increase (it is difficult to tell which leads), healthcare and construction are the two fastest-growing industries. These are sensitive to, and expand with, increasing population. Retail trade is another rapidly-growing industry. Local population growth fuels the retail trade expansion, but so does neighboring-area population growth and tourism activity and St. George is southwest Utah's regional fortress.

St. George is surrounded by sparsely populated rural areas, so consumers from surrounding and even far-flung Utah communities come to St. George for retail purchases. In addition, a major interstate highway runs through the community and provides a steady stream of travelers consuming retail amenities. The interstate highway is not just an economic feeder for St. George, but is an economic lifeline for various smaller communities as the interstate moves northward toward Salt Lake City.

The interstate travel, coupled with three national parks in the region, has contributed to accommodation and food services being both a prominent industry and adding significant jobs over the period.

Driven by the population increase, the education industry is also adding noticeable numbers of jobs. Education and manufacturing jobs have grown by 34.0 percent over the five pre-pandemic years. The remaining industries have also added sizable job gains. Including the mining sector, which increased by 100 jobs.

#### Occupation Demand

Of the 258 occupations available for occupational measurement, 235 showed some growth over the pre-pandemic five years.

The occupational growth contains a mixed message. Of the major occupation groups identified with the most new jobs added, the strongest growth is in occupational groupings with average wages that are not on the high side. These include office and administrative support, food preparation and serving, personal care occupations, sales and related, and construction occupations. Construction occupations can pay good wages, but most of the other groups do not.

The following list includes occupations that have increased their employment base by 400 or more positions across the pre-pandemic five years.

#### List of Highest-Growth Occupations

- |         |                                 |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers |
| 41-2031 | Retail Salespersons             |

35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
47-2061	Construction Laborers
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
29-1141	Registered Nurses
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
41-2011	Cashiers
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Scientific Products
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers
47-2111	Electricians
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks

41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks
11-3031	Financial Managers
39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors
39-9011	Childcare Workers
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
39-9041	Residential Advisors
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop

## **(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

### Emerging Industries

Economies are continually ebbing, flowing and churning. As some industries or occupations wane, others emerge. One technique to evaluate emerging industries or occupations is to look for an increase in an industry or occupation's share of the all-industry or all-occupation total over time.

Summarizing the data for Utah shows that several healthcare industry segments lead the way. These range from social assistance to care facilities for the elderly, outpatient care centers, mental health facilities, and medical and diagnostic laboratories. Several construction segments also show gains, including building equipment contractors, building foundation and exterior contractors, building finishing contractors, and other specialty trade contractors.

The generally high-paying professional and technical segments also contribute to this list, led by computer systems design and related services, management and technical consulting, scientific research and development, accounting and bookkeeping, and other professional and technical services. Many of these are labeled as high technology. Within education services, colleges and universities, business, computer and management training, educational support services, and other schools and instruction also made the list.

### Emerging Occupations

Occupations ebb and flow within the various industry sectors. While some occupations may fade or actually be replaced by computerization or automation, other occupations emerge to counter the void. Overall, the occupational mix grows and some occupations emerge to more or expanding prominence than others.

Focusing on emerging patterns, the major occupational categories that show noticeable growth include management occupations, construction and extraction, office and administrative support, business and financial occupations, and educational occupations.

The following list of occupations have increased their share of the state's total occupational mix over the pre-pandemic five years by 0.1 percentage points or higher.

List of Emerging Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
39-9021	Personal Care Aide
15-1199	Computer Occupations, All Other
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
47-2111	Electricians
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists
11-3031	Financial Managers
25-9041	Teacher Assistants
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software
11-1011	Chief Executives



13-1151	Training and Development Specialists
47-2081	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers
25-1191	Graduate Teaching Assistants

### Regional Analysis

#### Bear River Area

##### Emerging Industries

Emerging industries are identified as those whose share of the area's employment base is growing rapidly, and in this area 15 industries meet the criteria.

Bear River's largest single gain is in accounting and bookkeeping services. The largest collective gain is in the manufacturing arena, which has already been identified as a major employer in this area. Gains are measured in plastics and rubber products, transportation equipment, nonmetallic mineral products, wood products, furniture, and fabricated metal products.

Nonstore retailers and computer systems are the only two technology-centric industries that meet the requirements for the list.

##### Emerging Occupations

Occupations conform to the industry mix. As manufacturing is a large part of the Bear River region's industry base, it is not surprising that production occupations account for several of the emerging occupations, as do transportation and material moving occupations. Other major occupational categories with several emerging occupations are computer and mathematical, food preparation and serving, and educational instruction and library occupations.

The List of Emerging Occupations have increased their share of the region's total occupational mix over the pre-pandemic five years by 0.2 percentage points or higher.

##### List of Emerging Occupations

25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
11-1021	General and Operations Managers
25-9041	Teacher Assistants
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders

41-2031	Retail Salespersons
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand
39-9011	Childcare Workers
15-1199	Computer Occupations, All Other
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other
51-9023	Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
49-3093	Tire Repairers and Changers
15-1131	Computer Programmers
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs
35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks

#### Eastern Region

Emerging Industries

Emerging industries are identified as industry sub-sectors whose share of the area's employment base is growing rapidly. This encompasses 19 industries in the Eastern Region.

Collectively, education and healthcare are the major industry groups with the most sub-sectors making share gains in overall industry employment. These industries are driven by the needs of the local population and not based on customers or demand derived from outside the region. Apart from this, only several leisure and hospitality industries emerge within the major industry sectors.

### Emerging Occupations

Emerging occupation gains can be categorized within personal care and service, management, office and administrative support, business and finance, installation, maintenance and repair, and protective services occupations.

Occupations on the following list have increased their share of the region's total occupational mix by 0.15 percentage points or higher across the pre-pandemic five years.

### List of Emerging Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
41-2031	Retail Salespersons
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food

39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists
39-9032	Recreation Workers
39-9011	Childcare Workers
33-9092	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors
11-3031	Financial Managers
11-9081	Lodging Managers
43-4071	File Clerks
11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs
11-9051	Food Service Managers
53-3021	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks
11-1011	Chief Executives
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Tech/Scientific Products

#### Central/Southwest Region

Emerging Industries

Emerging industries are identified as industry sub-sectors whose share of the area's employment base is expanding measurably, comprising roughly 24 industries.

Given the large and rather balanced industry growth, emerging industry segments are scattered across the industry spectrum. Construction leads the way with a 77-percent gain in employment in the pre-pandemic five years. The nine construction segments with the most growth include building construction, plumbing and HVAC, poured concrete structures, electrical contractors, finished carpentry, and more. These job gains are mostly concentrated in the St. George area. That area has grown steadily for the past 40 years with an exception during the Great Recession and its multi-year shadow. If the St. George area can avoid a repeat of overbuilding and overpricing that extended its Great Recession slump, these construction sectors can remain targeted industries given St. George's long-term growth reality.

There is also noted growth in the high-paying and high-educated professional and technical arena. These include computer systems design, architecture and engineering, management and technical consulting, advertising, and other professional and technical services.

Manufacturing contributed to the emerging list, including food, furniture, and plastic and rubber products manufacturing.

### Emerging Occupations

The distribution of emerging occupations is broader across the occupational groupings than the growing occupation list. Management, installation, maintenance, and repair occupations, and production occupations help to balance the distribution.

Occupations on the following list have increased their share of the region's total occupational mix across the pre-pandemic five years by 0.15 percentage points or higher.

### List of Emerging Occupations

11-1021	General and Operations Managers
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education
47-2061	Construction Laborers
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
11-3031	Financial Managers
47-2111	Electricians
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians

41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks
39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors
39-9041	Residential Advisors
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Mfg., Ex. Tech/Scientific Products
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists
51-4041	Machinists
11-2022	Sales Managers
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators
39-9032	Recreation Workers
39-9011	Childcare Workers
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines
43-4131	Loan Interviewers and Clerks
11-1011	Chief Executives
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop

**(iii) Employers' Employment Needs**

## Employers Employment Needs

One of the most important occupational groupings, not just to Utah but any state economy, is STEM-based occupations. The common theme is the need for elevated education, high intellect, dynamic thinking, problem solving, good management and organization skills, proficiency in the mathematical and science disciplines, superior communication skills with clear and detailed expression, and attention to detail. These attributes can take years to obtain and expend extensive economic resources. These are skills and occupations that put an economy on the leading edge of innovation, growth, relevance, and opportunity.

Given Utah's robust growth across industries that employ a significant amount of STEM occupations, this implies the state is generally finding its needed labor supply. There is a general dialogue from the employer community that it would like to have more available workers, which implies that the Utah job growth rate has the potential to be even higher if there was an all-satisfying labor pool of workers with STEM-based skills and proficiencies.

Yet there are occupational classifications (based upon lower education requirements) that have their own critical needs and perceived shortages. These may largely be considered the greater economy's support or infrastructure occupations. Their appeal is offering living-wage compensation to people whose aptitudes are not built for higher education, or who don't have the means to achieve higher education.

Due to the immediate economic need of those seeking social assistance, some job training programs are designed to rapidly move people into any occupation. Other training is designed for workers who have the luxury to make the next step: to move up the wage ladder with jobs that can pull them toward a more middle-income existence. These are jobs that generally pay between \$30,000 and \$49,000 per year. Occupational projections are produced every two years by the Department of Workforce Services' Workforce Research and Analysis Division along with occupational median wage measures. This information serves as the primary tool for sorting occupations by pay, educational requirements, and job outlook. Specific targeting of various training programs or initiatives can be analyzed and supported with this traditional labor market information.

Traditional labor market information can be augmented with what is known as "real-time" labor market information. This entails reviewing electronic job board postings and compiling summary statistics. Help Wanted Online® is the real-time labor market information tool utilized by the Department of Workforce Services. This offers a look into the quantity and types of jobs employers are currently offering. Advertised occupations can be sorted by quantity of job ads, geographies, income levels, educational requirements, certifications, and desired skills (both hard and soft skills). Some of these variables are not assessed within the traditional labor market information tools provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration, so these real-time labor market tools have added value to this type of analysis.

Utah gains insight from Help Wanted Online® into the skills, credentials and licenses that Utah employers are currently seeking through job postings. These can be isolated to the job

advertisements in Utah's various regions, and also upon specific industries and occupations. Utah's utilization of this information makes it possible to include skills, credentials and licenses in Utah's WIOA plan evaluation..

The following are the top skills and certifications for Utah as analyzed from Help Wanted Online® across the first six months of 2019. Given the large amount of time soft skills are counted in relation to hard skills, one could conclude that soft skills are often more critical to employers than hard-skill credentials.

### Soft Skills

Oral and Written Communication

Marketing

Detail Oriented

Integrity

Customer Service Oriented

Problem Solving

Creativity

Team-oriented

Self-starting

Coaching

Organizational Skills

Sales Experience

Management Skills

Basic Computer Skills

Work Independently

Strong Leadership Skills

Project Management

Troubleshooting



Time Management

Analytical Skills

Work Ethics

Hard Skills

Microsoft Office

Quality Assurance

Forklifts

Preventive Maintenance

Software Development

Java

Technical Support

SQL

Tractor-trailers

Customer Relationship Management

Mathematics

Python

Linux

Quality Control

Bilingual

Behavioral Health

JavaScript

HTML

Cloud Computing

Blueprints

Certifications

Commercial Driver's License

Class A Commercial Driver's License

Basic Life Support

Security Clearance

Certified Registered Nurse

State Insurance License

HAZMAT

Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Advanced Cardiac Life Support

Pediatric Advanced Life Support

Continuing Education

Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

Accounting

Food Safety Programs

Tanker and Hazmat Endorsement

English as a Second Language

LPNs

Legal Document Services

## **B. Workforce Analysis**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA<sup>4</sup>. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups in the State and across regions identified by the State. This includes—

[4] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals;

Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[5] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

## i. Employment and Unemployment

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data, including labor force participation rates, and trends in the State.

Utah's strategic plan and vision are based on analysis of the state's pre-pandemic economy and workforce. We view the pandemic as a temporary interruption upon Utah's economy. We do not foresee that the pandemic has altered the underlying trend variables that have influenced the Utah economy through its recent economic history. We do see some structural changes remaining from the pandemic, like an increased amount of teleworking, but we do not see that significantly altering the need for and distribution of occupations. It will change the location of a work environment, but not necessarily the functions expected from the work environment.

Therefore, this plan will be anchored upon Utah's pre-pandemic economic characteristics. Utah has made a strong economic rebound from the pandemic, and it is rapidly returning to its pre-pandemic defining economic characteristics. This pre-pandemic trend characteristics approach, therefore, served as the basis for developing data-driven goals designed to prepare Utah's workforce to thrive and support the anticipated economic growth as illustrated by Utah's trend accomplishments.

Utah identified four major economic areas within the state: the Wasatch Front (Utah's principal urban area), the Bear River Area, the Eastern Region and the Central/Southwest Area. The latter three have enough distance or dissimilarity from Utah's urban core to warrant their own regional identifications.

Since 83 percent of the state's employment is embodied in the Wasatch Front, the overall state profile serves as a proxy for the profile of that urban core. Analysis is provided for the other three areas where appropriate.

Utah's economy operated as a full-employment economy leading up to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finding adequate quantities of labor was a challenge. Even with said

challenges, finding labor, though an effort, appeared to be manageable. The demand/supply relationship was tight, but the two forces were not dramatically apart.

Then the pandemic emerged and interrupted Utah's full-employment trend. Initial Utah COVID-19 job losses amounted to a 7.7 percent setback; a significant decline but the lowest job-loss percentage across all states. The Utah economy was largely "closed" throughout all of April 2020, but was reopened on a limited basis as early as May 2020. This re-opening, ahead of many other states, benefitted Utah by more rapidly re-engaging commerce and allowing Utah to commence one of the nation's best state-economic rebounds. By the time 2020 ended, Utah had experienced only a 1.3-percent job loss across the year. The year's unemployment rate averaged out to 4.7 percent after having elevated to over 10 percent when COVID-19 hit.

As 2021 has unfolded, Utah's economy continues to create new jobs and to steadily reopen formerly pandemic-restricted jobs. The economy's overall job count is higher than the magnitude achieved before the pandemic emerged.

By the end of spring, a collective mindset has emerged that the pandemic has run its course. Whether that is a correct assumption is yet to be seen, but the point is the collective mindset believes that it has. Therefore, previously impacted industries have reopened in full—at least that was their desire. With this rapid, collective commerce reopening came an instantaneous demand for labor. One would have assumed that labor would be available as the pandemic idled many workers. But any rapid labor return to the workplace has been a frictional and slow process. Because of that, a large gap has developed between the demand for labor and a curtailed response by labor toward that need.

We surmise this gap will work toward an eventual equilibrium, although it may be a slow and somewhat arduous task. It will be the defining characteristic through the remainder of 2021, and will probably not equalize until firmly into 2022. By then though, that should produce a return to full employment; to an environment like before the pandemic where the labor need is strong yet.

## ii. Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

### Labor Market Trends

The history of economic development is that new inventions or technologies come along and shake up the labor market. Industries that once had a dominant place in an economy, like canals, can be quickly and rapidly replaced by new and emerging technologies, like railroads. As a result, an overall economy's job count may actually increase, but within the

occupational mix, some occupations may diminish as an industry is displaced (canal workers, barge repair, etc.) while new occupations arise supporting the emerging technology (railroad conductors, track layers, etc.).

The current economic environment is no different. With the rise of the technology economy, the concern is that labor will be either replaced or displaced by automation and artificial intelligence. This is a valid concern. But it can be difficult to comprehend clearly given an environment of unemployment rate below 3.0 percent and with most of the business community searching for labor. A closer look reveals there is occupational churning going on and new technologies may be playing a part in occupational transformations.

A recent study by the Brookings Institute entitled *Automation and Artificial Intelligence; How Machines Are Affecting People and Places* summarizes the general trends that automation and artificial intelligence are having or could have on the labor market. Some major conclusions include:

- Automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will affect tasks in virtually all occupational groups in the future, but the effects will be of varied intensity and only drastic for some.
- Routine, predictable physical and cognitive tasks are the most vulnerable to automation.
- The most vulnerable jobs are in office administration, production, transportation, and food preparation.
- The remaining, more secure jobs, include a broader array of occupations ranging from the complex, “creative” professional and technical roles with high educational requirements, to low-paying personal care and domestic service work characterized by non-routine activities or the need for interpersonal social and emotional intelligence.
- Automation risk can vary across regions. Smaller, more rural communities have more exposure to automation-driven task replacement and smaller metropolitan areas are more vulnerable than larger ones.
- Men, young workers, and underrepresented communities work in more automatable occupations:
  - In this respect, the sharp segmentation of the labor market by gender, age, and racial-ethnic identity ensures that AI-era automation is going to affect demographic groups unevenly.

- Male workers appear noticeably more vulnerable to potential future automation than women, given men's overrepresentation in production, transportation, and construction-installation occupations.
- Women comprise upward of 70 percent of the labor force in relatively safe occupations, such as healthcare, personal services, and education occupations.
- Young workers will face higher automation exposure reflecting their overrepresentation in automatable jobs associated with food preparation and serving.
- Variation in race and ethnicity is important because there is a high representation of racial and ethnic groups in high-exposure occupations like construction and agriculture and transportation

Utah has completed analysis on automation and artificial intelligence impact on Utah occupations. This analysis draws upon the work of a 2013 study entitled *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerization?* This study classified an extensive list of occupations (high, medium, low) by their tasks being at risk to automation or replacement by artificial intelligence.

The purpose of the study was to identify occupations the Department of Workforce Services may not wish to recommend to job-training and retraining customers. What follows is a brief summary of the study and a sample listing of occupations found to be in decline within Utah.

### **Effects of Automation**

There are 574 Utah occupations available for employment change evaluation.

- Total 2018 Utah occupational employment was 1,381,537.
- 374 occupations gained jobs since 2013 with a total increase of 273,580.
- 200 occupations lost jobs since 2013 with a total decline of 58,485 jobs.
  - The net result is a Utah occupational gain of 215,100.
- Within all major occupational groups, only Protective Services and Production Occupations have on net lost jobs across this period.
- Some occupations with high exposure to automation did experience job loss while other high-exposure occupations also added jobs across this period.

- All high-exposure occupations had a net employment gain of 65,120.
- Occupations with medium and low exposure also lost some jobs across this period
- 126 (63%) of the 200 job-loss occupations (regardless of the exposure level) require no more than a high school diploma or a postsecondary non-degree award. This accounts for 74% of the job loss.

Of the overall Utah job loss, 53 percent occurred in high-exposure occupations. This suggests a causality, but high exposure is not overwhelmingly the prevalent job loss probability. It does suggest that automation influences aspects of Utah occupational decline. But overall, the economy is expanding occupational employment, not reducing it. Among all high-exposure occupations, there was a net employment gain of 65,120.

There are underlying individual occupational disruptions. There is a pattern showing that occupations requiring a lower degree of education are a dominant portion of the occupations that did experience decline. Nevertheless, all occupations that function with a lower degree of education added 109,000 new jobs across this period.

### **High Exposure Details**

High exposure occupations(greater than 70 percent of an occupation's tasks could be automated)

- 227 occupations
- 40 percent of all measured occupations
- Total Utah employment in these high-exposure occupations: 615,490
- 45 percent of all Utah occupational employment

Of the high exposure occupations:

- 203 of the 227 require no more than a high school diploma or a postsecondary non-degree award
- 161 of the 227 (71 percent) found in:
  - Office and Administrative Support
  - Construction and Extraction

- Installation, Maintenance, and Repair
- Production Occupations
- Transportation and Material Moving

In the list of 200 occupations that have lost employment:

- High-exposure occupations accounted for 53 percent of the job loss (31,000)
- Made up 97 of the 200 occupations with job loss
- 68 of the 97 (70 percent) in:
  - Office and Administrative Support
  - Construction and Extraction
  - Installation, Maintenance, and Repair
  - Production Occupations
  - Transportation and Material Moving.

Of the 97 occupations with high exposure that lost jobs:

- 84 require no more than a high school diploma or a postsecondary non-degree award
- Represent 93 percent of the high-exposure occupational loss

Occupations that require no more than a high school diploma or a postsecondary non-degree award that experienced noticeable Utah job loss (-50 or less) between 2013 and 2018 include (representative list):

SOC Code	SOC Title
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators
41-9041	Telemarketers
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants
43-6013	Medical Secretaries



47-5071	Roustabouts, Oil and Gas
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
43-6014 Executive	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and
41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers
43-9199	Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other
43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks
35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics
43-4111	Interviewers, Except Eligibility and Loan
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
43-4151	Order Clerks
53-7063	Machine Feeders and Offbearers
51-9141	Semiconductor Processors
37-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers
49-9052	Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers
43-6012	Legal Secretaries
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks
35-9021	Dishwashers
51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers
47-5013	Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas, and Mining

Not all of these occupations with decline are the result of automation or technological displacement, yet it is sensible to believe that many of them are.

### iii. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

#### Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

The most recent five-year estimates from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey report the Utah population ages 25 and over is educated in the following proportions:

Less than high school: 6.9%

High school: 23.1%

Some college, no degree: 25.5%

Associate's degree: 9.7%

Bachelor's degree: 23.4%

Graduate/professional degree: 11.3%

A recent headline of an internet article stating *More People are Underemployed Now than in 2000* is not a surprising conclusion. The main reason is that the overall labor force in Utah (and the nation) is actually overeducated in relation to the economy's occupational mix and the minimum education requirements. This is a good mismatch (over education) to have as the alternative would hinder the economy. For the underemployed this can be a frustrating situation, but for the economy as a whole, it is not an economic drag.

Pairing the percentage of Utah occupational employment with the same educational classifications shows the educational disparity:

	Statewide	Occupational
	<u>Education</u>	<u>Mix</u>
Less than high school:	6.9%	23.0%
High school:	23.1%	38.9%
Some college, no degree:	25.5%	8.8%

Associate's degree:	9.7%	2.2%
Bachelor's degree:	23.4%	16.5%
Graduate/professional degree:	11.3%	4.0%

These percentages indicate there could be a large cohort of underemployed people. For example, in Utah the occupational mix currently asks for 17 percent of the Utah population to

carry a bachelor's degree to meet the hard skills of the occupational mix. Yet 23 percent of the Utah population carries a bachelor's degree. The disparity is more pronounced in the graduate/professional arena as the occupational mix is only 4 percent demanding that hard skill, while 11 percent have attained such credentials. One can see that a sizable percentage of the population must fall "backward" from their education attainment in order to find a job.

	Bear River	Occupational
	<u>Education</u>	<u>Mix</u>
Less than high school:	6.8%	25.7%
High school:	24.0%	38.2%
Some college, no degree:	27.2%	11.0%
Associate's degree:	8.6%	1.6%
Bachelor's degree:	22.6%	21.0%
Graduate/professional degree:	10.7%	2.4%

	Eastern	Occupational
	<u>Education</u>	<u>Mix</u>
Less than high school:	10.6%	30.9%
High school:	32.3%	38.6%
Some college, no degree:	29.3%	13.7%
Associate's degree:	10.4%	0.5%
Bachelor's degree:	12.1%	14.9%

Graduate/professional degree:	5.3%	1.4%
	Central/Southwest	Occupational
	<u>Education</u>	<u>Mix</u>
Less than high school:	8.8%	32.6%
High school:	28.0%	35.9%
Some college, no degree:	28.9%	11.0%
Associate's degree:	10.0%	1.4%
Bachelor's degree:	16.8%	16.8%
Graduate/professional degree:	7.6%	2.2%

Across these areas and the education attainment, it is those with the graduate/professional degrees who display the largest mismatch between education attained and the education required.

This “over education” of the labor force would imply that the skills needed to fuel the overall Utah economy are there. It is also hard to argue within an economy that is growing at the fastest pace in the nation post-Great Recession (Utah) that it is not finding enough workers or enough skills to satisfy the economy's desire.

#### iv. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent ‘skill gaps’.

##### **(A) Workforce Analysis.**

###### Individuals with Barriers to Employment

<u>Type</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Source/Comment</u>
Low Income	189,846	Poverty and below; 18+ Population. ACS Table S1701
American Indians	49,442	ACS Table B02017
Alaska Natives	785	ACS Table B02017

Native Hawaiian	2,007	ACS Table B02016
Individuals with Disabilities	294,637	ACS Table S1810
Youth with Disabilities Table	32,302	0 to 17 Population; ACS  S1810
Older Individuals 55 and over.	666,378	WIOA definition of "Older" is ACS S0101
Homeless Individuals Homelessness; Annual Report	2,798	HUD 2020 Point-In-Time Assessment
Foster Care	11,964	ACS Table S0901
English Learners Households	20,691	ACS Table S1602; # of
Low Levels of Literacy Statistics	218,425	National Center for Educ.  (9%) and the ACS
Substantial Cultural Barriers Services Refugee Data	8,170	Department of Workforce
Individuals within 2 Years of TANF Exhaust Services Data	837	Department of Workforce
Single Parent	137,905	ACS Table B09002
Male	38,998	ACS Table B09002
Female	98,907	ACS Table B09002
Long-term Unemployed longer. Current	10,500	Six months or

Population Survey data.

Displaced Homemaker force	70,166	Single female in the labor
------------------------------	--------	----------------------------

ACS

Table S2302

Veterans	115,363	ACS S2101
Male	106,073	ACS S2101
Female	9,290	ACS S2101
Gulf War (2001+)	31,273	ACS S2101
Gulf War (1990)	27,552	ACS S2101
Vietnam	41,907	ACS S2101
Korea	8,086	ACS S2101
WWII	3,083	ACS S2101
Age		
18-34	10,437	ACS S2101
35-54	27,234	ACS S2101
55-64	18,911	ACS S2101
65-74	31,200	ACS S2101
75+	27,581	ACS S2101
With any disability	31,624	ACS S2101
Education		
Less than high school	3,749	ACS S2101
High School	23,278	ACS S2101
Some College/Associates	45,022	ACS S2101

Bachelors Plus	41,770	ACS S2101
Poverty	5,845	ACS S2101
Labor Force	64,600	CPS; ACS S2101
Participation Rate	49.1%	CPS; ACS S2101
Employed	62,300	CPS; ACS S2101
Unemployed	2,300	CPS; ACS S2101
Unemployment Rate	3.6%	CPS; ACS S2101

ACS = American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

CPS = Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

### Skill Gaps

This is a difficult concept to appraise given the available data. The job counting is done in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics producing the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. It can only measure the amount of employment that *has* developed in Utah, not the amount of employment that *could* develop. If there are real skill gaps in the economy where jobs do not get filled as a result, how does one count what has not happened? That is a measurement challenge given the premise that a skill shortage results in job needs going unfilled (the job count could be higher) because needed skills are in short supply.

There is much talk of skill gaps, but too often what is presented as a skill gap is really a wage gap. Systemic skill deficiencies are not the underlying issue, but instead low monetary compensation keeping people from supplying labor to many occupations. Therefore, when one is trying to find tangible skill gaps (systemic skill deficiencies), one must incorporate wage compensation into the conversation.

Wages alone do not provide the answer. One must also pair wages with skill and education segmentation. For example, being a machinist requires a needed skill set. A surgeon has not been trained with those needed skills yet a surgeon gets paid drastically more than a machinist. No matter how great a machinist's skills, there is a limit to the wages that machinists can hope to achieve. It will not approach a surgeon's wage; but neither will the training requirement. Therefore, one has to understand that education/skill segmentation will put ceilings on wage ranges, so wage evaluations must be coupled with education/skill compartmentalization.

The method used to research skills gaps involves segmenting occupations by the major education categories of advanced professional degrees, bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, some post-secondary training and high school education. These education segments could have some skill shortage issues, but the assumption is that as the education requirement lessens that skill shortages also lessen given the lower level of necessary skills.

The wage calculation within each segmentation centers on the gap between an entry level wage measure (the average of the bottom third of wage measures within a given occupation) and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile wage measure within each occupation. This assessment is based on the premise that if there is a skill shortage causing an inadequate labor supply for an occupational need, businesses will be more aggressive with attractive wages (entry-level wages) to lure labor to that occupation. Therefore, the smaller the gap between entry wages and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile (what the more experienced workers make) implies aggressive entry-level wage attraction and, therefore, more bidding for an undersupplied skill set.

At this point this is just a mathematical calculation between two wage-measure data points. First segment education, then calculate wage differences, and sort results on smallest gap to largest. Analyst interpretation plays a role, incorporating common sense, analyzing current help-wanted online data requests, and other available sensibilities.

Utilizing this method, the following are occupation areas by education level where skill shortages may be having an influence:

#### Professional and Graduate Degrees

SOC Code	Occupation Title
19-1040	Medical Scientists
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners
29-1140	Registered Nurse
29-1070	Physician Assistants
29-1050	Pharmacists
29-1122	Occupational Therapists
29-1127	Speech Language Pathologists
15-1110	Computer and Information Research Scientists



11-9033	Education Administrators, elementary and secondary
25-1072	Nursing Instructors and Teachers, postsecondary
19-1021	Biochemists and Biophysicists

This group has a strong healthcare presence with its specific focus upon education (hard skills) and certifications. Their need is also driven by Utah's rapid population growth as the healthcare industry tries to keep pace. Across the entire group, there is a common theme of STEM emphasis and aptitude.

#### Bachelor's Degrees

SOC Code	Occupation Title
15-1130	Software Developers and Programmers
15-1140	Database and Systems Administrators and Network Architects
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts
11-3111	Compensation and Benefits Managers
41-9031	Sales Engineers
17-2011	Aerospace Engineers
17-2070	Electrical and Electronic Engineers
17-2151	Mining and Geological Engineers
17-2112	Industrial Engineers
17-2041	Chemical Engineers
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers
17-2131	Materials Engineers
17-2051	Civil Engineers
17-2081	Environmental Engineers
17-2031	Biomedical Engineers

19-2042	Geoscientists
13-1081	Logisticians
13-2031	Budget Analysts

The above list could also include numerous management positions, but often those involve both training and tenure and promotion from within.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it does have a common theme. The STEM skills, and in particular mathematics, are at a premium, suggesting a potential skill deficiency within the greater labor force of STEM specialization. It should be noted that these occupations are growing in Utah, therefore the market is finding new workers; but again, it comes back to the available data. Current tools and information are designed to measure what the economy is achieving, not what it could achieve.

### Associate's Degrees

SOC Code	Occupation Title
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
15-1134	Web Developers
29-2033	Nuclear Medicine Technologists
29-2021	Dental Hygienists
29-2035	Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists
17-3021	Aerospace Engineering and Operations Technicians
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists
17-3013	Mechanical Drafters
17-3024	Electro-Mechanical Technicians
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians
49-2091	Avionics Technicians
17-3027	Medical Engineering Technicians

17-4031	Civil Engineering Technicians
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters

As with the bachelor's degree group, the associate's degree list contains a theme of STEM training.

#### High School and Some Postsecondary Training and Certification

SOC code	Occupation Title
51-8012	Power Distributors and Dispatchers
49-2095	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers
53-2012	Commercial Pilots
51-8013	Power Plant Operators
33-1012	Police Supervisors
33-1011	Correctional Officers Supervisors
51-8093	Petroleum Pump Systems Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers
49-9044	Millwrights
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment
47-2011	Boilermakers
49-3011	Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
49-9012	Control and Valve Installers and Repairers
47-2111	Electricians
49-9043	Maintenance Workers, Machinery
33-3051	Police Officers

51-4051	Metal-Refining Furnace Operators and Tenders
49-3042	Mobile heavy Equipment Mechanics
43-5050	Postal Service Workers

This is not an exhaustive list, but it portrays an undertone of skills and technical knowhow based upon a knowledge and proficiency with mathematical principles

These lists do not represent exhaustive possibilities within each education category, but they are representative of the smallest wage gaps between entry level wages and the 75<sup>th</sup> wage percentile coupled with high wages within the education classification, and additional information and knowledge as gleaned through tenured economic analysis.

## 2. Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an analysis of the workforce development activities, including education and training in the State, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, as identified in (a)(1)(B)(iii) above, and the employment needs of employers, as identified in (a)(1)(A)(iii) above. This must include an analysis of—

### A. The State's Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the State's workforce development activities, including education and training activities of the core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required <sup>6</sup> and optional one-stop delivery system partners.<sup>7</sup>

[6] Required one-stop partners: In addition to the core programs, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the one-stops: Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, HUD Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs program, Senior Community Service Employment program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless the Governor determines TANF will not be a required partner), Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Compensation programs, and YouthBuild.

[7] Workforce development activities may include a wide variety of programs and partners, including educational institutions, faith- and community-based organizations, and human services.

### B. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in (A), directly above.

### C. State Workforce Development Capacity

Provide an analysis of the capacity of State entities to provide the workforce development activities identified in (A), above.

## **Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis**

### **(A) The State's Workforce Development Activities**

Utah's Unified Plan includes an analysis of its workforce development activities, including education and training in the state, to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers as identified above.

Utah's workforce development activities include the education and training activities of the core programs, one-stop required partner programs and other partners.

Utah's new Governor has established the Utah One Roadmap to highlight his team's goals and strategies that support and address the state's workforce development needs. The roadmap is updated when needed. Below is the second version of the roadmap which outlines six areas of development that will be prioritized. Those areas are:

- Economic advancement: The state will refocus its investment on vocational and technical training while restructuring state business incentives and advocate the public and private sector to pursue clean energy development and low-emission vehicle fleets.
- Education: Addressing funding disparities between school districts and continuing to work toward clarifying roles in education governance.
- Rural issues: Continuing to develop a long-term comprehensive plan for water conservation, storage and optimization along with improving internal Utah food supply chains.
- Health security: The state will work on ways to improve transparency of healthcare costs.
- Equity and opportunity: The Governor's office will continue to increase access to Utah boards and commissions for historically underrepresented groups including women, people of color and LGBTQ individuals. The office says it will "lead by example" with regards to gender pay equity, family-friendly and inclusive policies, and cultural change.
- State government efficiency: Finding ways to make government more responsive, accessible and accountable through an "improved customer experience" online as well as performance management tools.

The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity (Go Utah) strives to "create sustainable advantages around emerging and mature workforce sectors. The state convenes constituents and organizes strategies to support and build specific industries in its robust, diverse economy." The Go Utah Office also provides initiatives to support businesses in the rural areas of the state. Their Center for Rural Development offers six programs that enhance economic opportunity and development in rural Utah. From tax credits to grants, there is a wide variety of programs to help businesses and the workforce prosper.

The post-secondary landscape in the state includes sixteen institutions of higher education comprising the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) and a number of private nonprofit and private for-profit institutions. Collectively, these institutions provide a diverse and broad array of certificates and degrees that prepare Utah's adults to become productive and contributing members

within their respective communities. The higher education system targets occupations classified in labor market data as having high employer demand and high median wages, and utilizes information from employer committees to help guide their programming and curriculum development.

The educational offerings provided by the state's post-secondary institutions span a vast educational landscape. Their programs range from technical certificates in relatively short periods of time for specific occupations through advanced degrees, developing some of the state's and nation's top talent in highly specialized disciplines. Additionally, these offerings affect students in secondary education (K-12) and Adult Education as they seek college and career choices, enter pathways that meet their goals, and in some cases receive assistance through WIOA funds.

## Education & Training

### **Utah System of Higher Education**

Utah created a new Utah Board of Higher Education in 2020 and combined the previously-separate Utah System of Technical Colleges and Utah System of Higher Education into a single system with sixteen public colleges and universities. Each of these institutions fulfills a particular educational mission for the state. The institutions include:

- Eight technical colleges, providing technical education certificate programs and occupational skills: Bridgerland Technical College, Davis Technical College, Dixie Technical College, Mountainland Technical College, Ogden-Weber Technical College, Southwest Technical College, Tooele Technical College, Uintah Basin Technical College
- Two community colleges, providing technical education and transfer certificates and associate degrees: Salt Lake Community College, Snow College
- Four regional universities, providing certificates, associate and bachelor's degrees, and limited master's degrees: Dixie State University, Southern Utah University, Utah Valley University, Weber State University
- Two research universities, providing bachelor's and graduate degrees, and research: University of Utah, Utah State University (Utah State University also provides technical education and community college roles in southeastern Utah)

These public institutions provide the majority of higher education programs and services within the state. They serve as economic levers for the state through research, teaching and service, and Career and Technical Education. Institutions work closely with local business and industry leaders to develop and deliver Career and Technical Education certificate and associate degree programs specifically tailored to local workforce needs, utilizing employer advisory committees, and employer partnerships for internships and placement, equipment or program support and more. Institutions are focused on workforce development, career counseling, internship services, apprenticeships, and career employment. Institutions maintain close association with each other and with high schools to ensure pathways and educational opportunities are available to students. Collectively, these Utah System of Higher Education institutions serve over 200,000 students.

USHE's technical colleges are independently accredited by the Council on Occupational Education, an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Each program is accountable for meeting benchmarks annually for student completion (60%), placement (70%), and licensure (70%), validating relevance and alignment with industry need. Most programs are offered in a competency-

based format, providing opportunities for students to receive credit for prior learning experience. This increases the efficiency and affordability of training for students. Many programs include pathways, which support transfer opportunities to encourage students to continue their education between secondary and post-secondary educational institutions.

In addition to institutional accreditation, institutions offer programs that require, or electively seek, programmatic accreditations and approvals. Such programs are held to rigorous standards of compliance, performance, and student outcomes. Many programs prepare students for industry credentials, including certification and/or licensure. These approvals and student attainment of credentials provide third-party validation of program quality and alignment with industry needs.

Utah System of Higher Education institutions provide opportunities for secondary students to access and progress in post-secondary education while in high school. Students can complete college coursework tuition-free with nominal fees through dual enrollment in a technical college or concurrent enrollment in a degree-granting institution.

Under the direction of the Utah Board of Higher Education, the Utah College Advising Corps has expanded to serve 89 high schools during the 2021-2022 school year, with the intention to expand to support every high school with high-quality college access advising by 2024-2025.

The college access advisors will:

- Advise students as they choose a meaningful postsecondary pathway
- Assist students with submitting college applications, applying for scholarships, the FAFSA, and financial aid
- Connect students to their receiving institution
- Create a college-going culture in their high school

The Utah Board of Higher Education administers programs to support workforce development opportunities, especially for those student from underserved communities:

- The Utah Promise Scholarship, state's needs-based scholarship program, available to recent high school graduates and adult learners at Utah's public colleges and universities, as well as Utah's public technical colleges. The Utah Promise Scholarship covers tuition and fees for up to two years.
- The T.H. Bell Scholarship is for students intent on entering the teaching profession in Utah. It can be used at all public or private institutions in Utah that offer an approved program.
- The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education Professional Student Exchange Program enables students in 11 western states to enroll in selected out-of-state professional programs usually because those fields of study are not available at public institutions in their home states. Students enrolled in this Professional Student Exchange Program receive preference in admission and pay reduced levels of tuition.
- The Adult Learner's Grant, adopted during the 2021 General Session, provides an opportunity for adult learners seeking online education to receive financial assistance.

USHE's technical education institutions administer Custom Fit, which is a state-funded program intended to increase business growth, productivity, and/or performance for Utah employers.

Companies receive subsidies to assist with the cost of short-term employee training. In 2021, 1,760 companies and 17,826 employees were served by Custom Fit funds.

### Utah Adult Education

Utah Adult Education plays an important partnership role in workforce development. Utah Adult Education provides three core services, which include literacy instruction for students with academic levels below the ninth grade, high school completion through a 24 credit secondary diploma or completion of the GED®, and English Language Acquisition for multilingual students. Adult education empowers out of school individuals ages 16 and above to become self-sufficient by gaining the skills necessary for postsecondary education and training, employment, and personal success. Utah Adult Education assists adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, employment, and self-sufficiency while completing a secondary education and basic literacy instruction. Programs from across the state work with training providers in their communities to create programs tailored to adult education students by combining adult education services with occupational training. Utah Adult Education also partners with community resources to ensure students have access to needed resources.

### Utah State Board of Education (K-12)

Public secondary education (K-12) is a vital partner in meeting the state's overall education and training objectives. Educating the children of Utah prepares them for post-secondary education and the workforce. In addition, there are programs and partner programs that directly support this transition, including:

- College and Career Awareness: Explores and prepares students for college and career pathways, focusing on jobs that are high skill and high demand as well as satisfying and financially rewarding
- Career and Technical Education: Creates pathways to lifelong career success for every secondary student by providing him or her with the technical skills and academic knowledge needed to prepare for future employment and/or a successful transition to post-secondary education
- Work-Based Learning: Provides sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.
- Career and Technical Education Pathways: A pathway is a sequence of courses within a student's area of interest. A pathway connects from high school to college for a certificate, a degree, and/or career. Pathways help students prepare for college and career by offering appropriate academic and skill development, concurrent enrollment courses that meet degree requirements, and earn state and industry certifications
  - International Baccalaureate program: Consists of three programs that encompass ages 3-19:
  - Primary Years Program (Ages 3-12)



- Middle Years Program (Ages 12-16)
- Diploma Program (Ages 16-19)

All three programs require study in a broad range of subjects, including content in cultural education, and place special emphasis in acquiring and developing language, developing skills of learning and creating opportunities for individual and collaborative planning as well as a community service component requiring action and reflection to complement the course of study.

- Advanced Placement program: Offers high-school students worldwide the opportunity to take college-level courses while attending secondary school. Advanced Placement courses are invariably more rigorous than other high-school offerings.
- Concurrent Enrollment and agreements with post-secondary institutions: The purpose of Concurrent Enrollment is to provide a challenging college-level experience for students in their last two years of high school. Course offerings in math, science, social studies, language arts, fine arts, humanities, world languages, career and technical programs, and education have been implemented in high schools throughout the state.

## **Department of Workforce Services Divisions**

### Workforce Development Division

The Department of Workforce Services' employment exchange system supports workforce development. Whether a job seeker is in the beginning phases of choosing a career or needs a better job, the Department of Workforce Services offers an array of online and in-house services. This employment exchange system fuels Utah's economic engine by supporting the workforce with training, education and other resources. The department's top priority is to align the skills and knowledge of Utah's citizens with the needs of employers. The Workforce Development Division created and provided a variety of new virtual resources for individuals to utilize during the pandemic, including online workshops and virtual job fairs. Additional workforce development tools and activities include:

- Career planning
- Job readiness tools
- Job matching
- Online portal
- Business development and partnerships
- Economic data

### Utah Office of Rehabilitation

The Department of Workforce Services, Office of Rehabilitation has partnered with the Utah State Board of Education, Department of Workforce Services Workforce Development Division, and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities to implement "School to Work" pilots in five different Utah school districts. The "School to Work" pilot teams utilize Customized Employment to help

students with disabilities work toward competitive, integrated employment prior to graduation from high school or post high school. Teams work collaboratively to serve students and blend/braid funding so students can access wrap around services needed to become employed and independent.

The pandemic has impacted service delivery to students in finding employment amid concerns for health and contagion. Limited engagement with partnerships occurred due to the pandemic.

## **Department of Workforce Services Programs**

### Employment First Initiative

The Utah Employment First Partnership is a shared commitment among the Utah Department of Workforce Services including the Office of Rehabilitation, the Division of Services for People with Disabilities, and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. The goal is to improve state government services focused on persons with disabilities to help them achieve competitive, integrated and community-based employment. Utah's Employment First Initiative supports workforce development. It expects, encourages, provides, creates and rewards integrated employment in the workforce. It is the first and preferred outcome for working-age youth and adults with disabilities at minimum wage or higher. This program focuses on individuals with complex and significant disabilities for whom job placement in the past has been limited or traditionally has not occurred.

### Choose to Work

Choose to Work is a program designed to meet the expanding needs of Utah employers by providing qualified and job-ready individuals. Choose to Work's employment specialists provide statewide job development and placement service to Utah job seekers with disabilities. Choose to Work specialists support employers by educating and increasing understanding in the value of individuals with disabilities in order to recruit, hire, retain, and promote individuals with disabilities. Applicants' skills range from entry level to professional in ~~virtually~~ all job categories.

### Work Success

The Work SUccess program continues to participate in a national study, NextGen Evaluation, sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation within the Administration of Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate Utah's Work Success program until March 2022. Work Success is currently in the embargo period of the study, with a pathway to other Workforce Services career services, and is under consideration by Workforce Services leadership to become operational again.

In addition to the evaluation of the Work Success program and documenting the most effective components of the coaching, design and implementation, Mathematica Policy Research will include a cost-analysis of the program. Outcomes from the study include measures of success in:

- Obtaining and retaining employment;
- Career advancement;
- Earnings;
- Receipt of TANF and other measures of self-sufficiency;
- Other indicators in personal and family well-being; and
- Improvement of self-regulation.

Findings on Work Success will be provided in a series of reports from Mathematica beginning Fall of 2021 and produced on a rolling basis through 2023.

### Veterans Initiatives

Veterans receive Priority of Service as they transition from the military or any time they seek employment services from the Department of Workforce Services to gain or improve their employment status. Veteran and Military Employment Services supports veterans in their reintegration process as they leave the military and rejoin the civilian workforce. The Job for Veteran State Grant, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor/Veteran Employment and Training Services, provides individualized career services for veterans that have significant barriers to employment. The Department of Workforce Services monitors and engages veteran customers in an effort to reduce the duration of veterans on the unemployment rolls and to help veterans on state-provided Medicaid seek Veterans Administration medical benefits. Accelerated Credentialing to Employment helps veterans, National Guard members, reservists and spouses gain licenses and certifications that lead to employment. The Utah Patriot Partnership program is an employer recognition program for those employers who actively seek to employ veterans, currently serving military members, and their spouses.

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)

Utah has the advantage of integrating programs such as TANF and SNAP in its one-stop delivery system. These programs help provide access to a greater number of job seekers who can meet employers' immediate workforce needs. Connecting recipients of these programs with career and training services increases their employment opportunities.

Utah's SNAP program encourages outreach and engagement in career services through self-service and mediated means. The online system allows job seekers to evaluate their job preparation needs and, based on their responses, provides workshops to meet their needs. These workshops can be accessed online and in person to help identify transferable skills, relate labor-market information, build a résumé, create well-crafted answers to interview questions, draft a marketing message, etc. Participants learn to use the online labor exchange system to search for employment opportunities. They can track their applications, interviews and any other follow up related to their job search online. The integration of these programs provides job seekers with one access point to reconnect with the workforce and increase their employability through training services.

### Medicaid Expansion

On December 23, 2019, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services authorized the Utah Department of Health to implement full Medicaid expansion in the State of Utah. The expansion will extend Medicaid eligibility to Utah adults whose annual income is up to 138% of the federal poverty level (\$17,236 for an individual or \$35,535 for a family of four). The federal government will cover 90% of the costs of these services, with the state covering the remaining 10%. It is estimated that up to 120,000 Utah adults are eligible for the expansion program.

### The Utah Data Research Center

The Utah Data Resource Center is a program of the Workforce Research and Analysis Division of the Department of Workforce Services. The center was created through the state legislative process. The center was directed to establish a data research program so the following agencies are required to contribute data to the system:

- Utah Department of Workforce Services
- Utah State Board of Education
- Utah System of Higher Education
- Utah Department of Health

Once compiled by the Utah Disability Resource Center, the data constitute a longitudinal data system and therefore support longitudinal research methods. The data is critical for providing answers to complex public policy questions. The data-contributing agencies support the shared goals of leveraging and utilizing these data in a centralized data warehouse for the purpose of conducting research and creating a more efficient modality for the exchange of data across agencies. The centralization of these data provides far greater access to protected data for the completion of reporting, research, planning, evaluation, policy and decision making.

#### Job Growth Fund

The Job Growth Fund is a strategic revenue source that funds employer initiative programs. This revenue comes from the UI Special Administration Expense Account. The fund helps support training, education and job-creation/retention and workforce programs. Currently it is leveraged to support the goals and vision of this plan. Utah will continue to explore ways to utilize this resource to support and continuously improve its workforce development strategies in partnership with the State Workforce Development Board.

#### Commissioner of Apprenticeship Programs

During the 2019 legislative session, HB 280 created a Utah Commissioner of Apprenticeship Programs to be housed within the Department of Workforce Services. The duties of the Commissioner include promoting and educating the public on apprenticeship opportunities, coordinating and collaborating with key stakeholders and providing an annual written report of apprenticeship program activities to the legislature.

The overall goals are to:

- Increase awareness of apprenticeship opportunities for youth and adults as being a valuable pathway to success
- Promote apprenticeship opportunities to employers as a valuable talent recruitment, retention and workforce development strategy
- Identify high-quality apprenticeship programs and best practices that can be shared

By identifying, expanding and promoting high-quality industry driven apprenticeship programs, we will assist in filling the skills gap, create a pipeline and provide a qualified workforce to meet the hiring demands of Utah employers.

During the 2021 Utah legislative session, HB 391 further defined registered apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and youth apprenticeship in state statute [35A-6-102](#). Standardized definitions ensure that key stakeholders use a common language and message, resulting in development and expansion of high-quality programs. Standardized definitions support the state's goal of promoting apprenticeship programs as a viable career pathway to success for both youth and adults. To ensure

that there are a wide variety of programs available, the Commissioner of Apprenticeship Programs continues to work with key stakeholders to further diversify industry representation.

#### Housing and Community Development

The Housing and Community Development Division serves communities statewide to build local capacity, fund services and infrastructure, and leverage resources for critical community programs. From funding a rural water system project to helping low-income families with utility costs, we care deeply about the quality of life for our fellow citizens across the state. The division provides the following services:

- Helps communities with their infrastructure, bonding ability and basic community services;
- Gives critical assistance to communities with some of their toughest community problems, like hunger, homelessness and domestic violence;
- Provides tools and resources for developing affordable housing;
- Directly helps homeowners reduce energy bills and improve their living conditions; and
- Administers a wide array of federal grants, making funding available to a number of Utah communities, and offers training and technical assistance to make it possible and easier for communities to receive funding.

#### **Workforce System Partners, Programs and Initiatives**

##### STEM Action Center

The STEM Action Center is Utah's partner in promoting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education through the identification and support of best practices and leveraging of resources across education, industry, government and community partners to support economic prosperity. Their vision is to bring STEM to every Utah home, school and community to build a brighter future.

##### Utah's Department of Cultural & Community Engagement

The Department of Cultural and Community Engagement understands humanity is made up of many different cultures, and that's the first step in creating social belonging. Cultural engagement is participation, advocacy, and cultivation of the diverse characteristics of all Utahns. Life is enhanced through celebration, innovation, science, music, art, literature, and traditions. It provides social and economic value to communities, and it opens our eyes to the unique traits that make Utah's people.

A strong community collaborates to solve issues and fosters a sense of togetherness through shared cultural experiences. A community's cultural assets are the pentacle of its pride and uniqueness. These assets can be leveraged to attract economic opportunities or used to reinforce belonging among its people. For local governments, having invested citizens tells you that they see themselves as leaders who support the common good.

##### State Workforce Development Board

Utah's governor has created specific, attainable goals that are relevant to the economy of today and tomorrow. In doing so, he created objectives and action items to guide and challenge his cabinet. The Department of Workforce Services executive director and the State Workforce Development Board accept leadership roles in this call to action. Collaboration and partnership are the keys to achieving these goals. Department of Workforce Services executives, agency staff, community and business

partners, and State Workforce Development Board members serve on various boards, committees and workgroups that target the governor's goals. This includes partnering and contributing to the Utah Economic Summit, Rural Economic Summit and quarterly economic meetings.

### Career Pathways

Career pathways are the culmination of partnering agencies and educational institutions in Utah working together to create a world-class workforce. Career pathways provide clear goals for individuals seeking to improve their situations. Career pathways consist of stackable credentials and necessary supports that remove barriers and allow individuals to move towards earning a family-sustaining wage. Career pathways support multiple entry and exit points as individuals discover additional educational and career opportunities available to them along the path. Key partners in career pathway efforts include Utah's WIOA partners, employers, the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, and the State Workforce Development Board.

### Data Systems & Warehouses

An important part of the workforce development system is collecting and reporting data to measure outcomes and performance. Utah agencies, including the Department of Workforce Services, Adult Education, and the Utah System of Higher Education collect and analyze data to produce required state and federal reports.

### Talent Ready Utah Program

The Talent Ready Utah Program is designed to strengthen collaboration between industry and education to better respond to the needs of regional and statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations. It is a collaborative partnership among:

- The Department of Workforce Services
- The Utah System of Higher Education
- The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity
- The Utah State Board of Education
- The Utah State Legislature

Talent Ready Utah program provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to regional and statewide industry needs or industry trade associations serving high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations or regional economic needs. Talent Ready Utah program also provides support to public school districts, individual schools or charter schools to develop, implement or enhance career pathway programs and connect them to post-secondary institutions. Some programs that operate from the Talent Ready Utah program are Career Pathways, Utah Works, and the Talent Ready Apprenticeship Connection.

The Talent Ready Utah program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers.

### The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity

The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity's activities and goals support workforce development in Utah. Their four economic development principles include to:

- Strengthen and grow existing Utah businesses, both urban and rural
- Increase innovation, entrepreneurship and investment
- Increase national and international business
- Prioritize education to develop the workforce of the future

The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity has identified six clusters to target. Each of these clusters were selected by analyzing data and gathering input from businesses. The clusters align with the industry sectors selected by the State Workforce Development Board. They include:

- Aerospace and defense
- Energy and natural resources
- Financial services
- Life sciences
- Outdoor products
- Software development and information technology

### The Indian Training Center

The primary program design of the Indian Training Education Center includes investing in participant services that promote talent development for long term employment and greater earnings potential rather than quick placement in a minimum wage job with no opportunity for advancement. The Indian Training Education Center focuses on education and training because it is the best way to prepare participants to enter the workforce and enable individuals to find and keep jobs that provide a living wage, allowing them to support themselves and their families. Services include:

- Adult Basic Education
- Occupational Skills Training
- High School Services
- Job Search Assistance
- Self-Service Activities
- Supportive Services
- Follow-Up Services

### Futures Through Training , Utah Farmworker Program

Futures Through Training's Utah Farmworker Program helps eligible agriculture workers and their dependents improve their lives through education, training and other services. Futures Through Training's top priority is to support and educate its agriculture population by upgrading employment skills and credentials with the goal of increasing wages, job advancement, and job retention. Services include:

- Financial assistance with programs ranging from a high school diploma/GED up through a bachelor's degree
- Assistance for needed items to start a job including tools, clothing, and transportation
- Career Counseling/Planning
- Job Search
- Job Readiness Tools
- Mentoring

#### Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides training for low-income, unemployed seniors. Participants also have access to employment assistance through American Job Centers.

Senior Community Service Employment Program participants gain work experience in a variety of community service activities at non-profit and public facilities, including schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and senior centers. The program provides over 40 million community service hours to public and non-profit agencies, allowing them to enhance and provide needed services. Participants work an average of 20 hours per week and are paid the highest of federal, state or local minimum wage. This training serves as a bridge to unsubsidized employment opportunities for participants.

Participants must be at least 55, unemployed, and have a family income of no more than 125 percent of the federal poverty level. Enrollment priority is given to veterans and qualified spouses, then to individuals who are over 65, have a disability, have low literacy skills or limited English proficiency, reside in a rural area, are homeless or at risk of homelessness, have low employment prospects, or have failed to find employment after using services through the America Job Center system.

#### Job Corps

Established in 1964 by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Job Corps is mostly a residential program with an open entry and exit. There are 123 Job Corps across all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Approximately 50,000 are served each year in ages 16-24. Job Corps' Mission is to educate and train highly motivated young people for successful careers in the nation's fastest-growing industries. Key Benefits include:

- Career technical training in high-growth industries
- Students can earn a high school diploma or the equivalent, or college credits



- Tuition-free to eligible individuals, including housing, meals, basic medical care, a living allowance, hands-on training, and career preparation
- Transitional support services, such as help finding employment, housing, and transportation
- Graduates enter the workforce or an apprenticeship, go on to higher education, or join the military

#### Easterseals-Goodwill Senior Community Service Employment Program

Easterseals-Goodwill Senior Community Service Employment Program helps seniors 55 years of age and older achieve economic independence and improve their lifestyle through job training and employment services. The Senior Community Service Employment Program is a community service and work-based job training program. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program offers free job placement services through paid individualized training opportunities. Participants gain experience and skills they need to stay active, supplement their income and contribute to their communities while the workforce gains a pool of highly motivated, reliable workers with useful skills and valuable life experience.

The program provides services to employers and local community agencies as well, through access to pre-screened candidates, assistance with workplace diversification and tax credits along with job-related follow-up and coaching. Employers can partner with the program for possible reimbursement of the first 30-days of wages for program participants through On the Job Experience.

#### Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)

The mission of the Division of Child and Family Services is to keep children safe from abuse and neglect and provide domestic violence services by working with communities and strengthening families. They offer many services and resources for:

- Adoption
- Child protective services
- Domestic violence services
- Foster care
- In-home services to families
- Kinship care
- Child abuse and neglect prevention
- Youth services for those in foster care

#### Statewide Adult Recidivism Reduction

Utah workforce system partners work together to support reentry efforts for intensive and high-risk offenders, both male and female, ages 18-35 since this population accounts for 60 percent of returns to prison. This program is funded by a Second Chance Act grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. Partners include Utah Courts, Utah Board of Pardons and Parole, Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Utah Department of Workforce Services, Utah Governor's Office and community support. The partners have organized into key work groups which include:

- Case planning

- Community engagement
- Programming and interventions
- Risk assessment and policy

## **(B) The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities**

### Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

During the past six years, Utah agency, community, and business partners have worked together to implement Utah's WIOA plan. Utah's plan implementation has gathered momentum over the years because it is built upon the state's strong workforce development system. State leaders from the governor's office, the state legislature, almost all agencies, public education, adult education and higher education entities at the state and local levels strive to improve Utah's economic environment. These entities continue to communicate and share information with one another in a variety of ways. Working together to implement the WIOA plan has enhanced and built upon existing partnerships that were already strong and collaborative.

Strengths include:

- Successful implementation of Utah's first Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) including the certification of comprehensive one-stop centers and affiliate one-stop centers
- Active and committed State Workforce Development Board and committee members
- The Department of Workforce Services' ability to successfully deliver integrated services statewide, including many of the core and mandatory programs under WIOA
- The Office of Rehabilitation is housed with the Department of Workforce Services and has staff co-located in several comprehensive one-stop centers
- Strong collaboration among all the core partners, including all WIOA programs housed within the Department of Workforce Services and Adult Education
- Continual improvement of an integrated workforce system that shares information and data among key partners such as Unemployment Insurance, Wagner-Peyser and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Online, 24 hour access, to many services
- A high level of expertise at the operational level via the core partners' staffs, which, along with the commitment to help people, provides a strong base to build and develop partnerships
- The Department of Workforce Services developed virtual tools and resources in response to the conditions of the pandemic, many of them will continue to be available for individuals that need them.

Utah foresees certain challenges in this implementation, including:

- Establishing sufficient resources and funding sources

- Increased pressure on the comprehensive one-stop centers
- Level of effort required to develop and maintain strong partnerships
- Achieving the emphasis on transition-age youth and the 15 percent funding requirement
- Attaining the Eligible Training Provider performance data required from education and training providers
- Lacking diverse education opportunities at the operational level to offer clients/customers outside the Wasatch Front economic corridor
- Helping partners with the implementation of WIOA related initiatives at the operational level

### **(C) State Workforce Development Capacity**

Utah's state workforce system partners continually evaluate and analyze their capacity to meet state needs. While most of this analysis is accomplished by individual organizations reviewing their own capacity, core partners in the local comprehensive one-stop centers have started to evaluate their capacity, as partners, as they coordinate and align services. When gaps are identified, they reach out to required partners or other community partners to ensure that job seeker, student, client and business customer needs are addressed.

## **b. State Strategic Vision and Goals**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include—

### **1. Vision**

Describe the State's strategic vision for its workforce development system.

### **2. Goals**

Describe the goals for achieving this vision based on the analysis in (a) above of the State's economic conditions, workforce, and workforce development activities. This must include—

(A) Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment<sup>8</sup> and other populations.<sup>9</sup>

(B) Goals for meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

[8] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[9] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth and any other populations identified by the State.

### 3. Performance Goals

Using the tables provided within each Core Program section, include the State's expected levels of performance relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA. (This Strategic Planning element only applies to core programs.)

### 4. Assessment

Describe how the State will assess the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the State in relation to the strategic vision and goals stated above in sections (b)(1), (2), and (3) and how it will use the results of this assessment and other feedback to make continuous or quality improvements.

#### **(b.) State Strategic Vision and Goals**

##### Utah's Strategic Vision and Goals

Utah's unified plan includes the state's strategic vision and goals for developing its workforce and meeting business needs to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

##### Utah's Vision

A strong economy, now and in the future, depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will enhance and expand collaborative efforts with businesses and organizations, educational institutions, community partners, and government agencies through business development and partnerships related to key industry sectors and occupations. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

##### Goals

Utah's goals focus on preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations. Utah's goals support meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

Goal Focus: All-Encompassing Partnerships Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, organizations and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce and create opportunities for sustainable employment. Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

- Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities

- Promote and participate in opportunities to align, collaborate, and leverage resources among core and required partners, particularly in comprehensive one-stop centers, to continually improve service to individuals and ensure those seeking assistance receive a service or an effective referral
- Working with workforce system partners, particularly core and required partners and the State Workforce Development Board, to ensure current labor market information and performance data are utilized to inform the development of an effective and integrated workforce system that ensures support of diverse local economies throughout the state

Goal Focus: Employers Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

- Ensuring business needs are met by collecting information from partner surveys, reports, and business or industry groups and identifying gaps or opportunities to improve services, including building stronger collaboration, alignment and leveraging resources
- Reaching out to employers to help design career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
- Partnering to promote and support current work-based learning opportunities and coordinate to recruit more organizations to provide these types of training opportunities
- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector
- Involving State Workforce Development Board members in promoting business customer surveys, encouraging participation on board committees, and utilizing the business services available so they can provide feedback and ideas for continual improvement
- Providing quality labor market information, sector-based approaches and a well-trained talent pipeline for employers in order to increase their competitiveness

Goal Focus: Education and Training Education and training partners will establish programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of businesses and organizations, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. Partnerships will facilitate clear connections for students to join Utah's workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors
- Ensuring all partners are aware of the educational offerings available and are recruiting and making referrals for WIOA targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment
- Developing programs and strategies that help high school students connect to concurrent enrollment, high school Career and Technical Education, and other partnership pathways to post-secondary Career and Technical Education programs and ensuring that all partners are aware of the programs
- Utilizing short-term post-secondary Career and Technical Education certificate programs that link to recognized industry credentials, including a subset of certificate or degree programs

(stacked and latticed credentials) to provide efficient pathways for students to achieve additional educational credentials.

- Ensuring core and required partners align, coordinate, and collaborate as career pathway initiatives are developed and implemented, particularly in areas where there is a comprehensive one-stop center

Goal Focus: Workforce Utah will provide education and training options that provide the skills and competencies required to meet employer and job seeker needs. Strong partnerships will enable job seekers to find sustainable employment and employers to recruit and retain quality employees. This will involve:

- Increasing awareness for the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce and providing supplemental preparation and/or training
- Leveraging core and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting
- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate to develop career pathways that support ongoing skill development, including apprenticeship, work-based learning, customized training
- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to employed, underemployed, and unemployed individuals
- Ensuring current labor market information is accessible to individuals and assists them in making decisions related to skill and credential attainment, occupational wages, and jobs in demand

Goal Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment Government and community partners will leverage and align resources to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment so that at-risk populations have greater opportunities in the workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Ensuring partners have strong relationships at the local level so education partners connect targeted populations to community services that support them
- Partnering to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that connect targeted populations to services and ensure best practices are implemented to access services, coordinate outreach methods, and messaging to target populations
- Ensuring partners develop a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies in serving targeted populations

#### Performance Goals

Utah's performance goals will be established in the State Unified Plan as required.

#### Assessment

#### Vision

A strong economy, now and in the future, depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will enhance and expand collaborative efforts with businesses and organizations, educational institutions, community partners, and government agencies through business development and partnerships related to key

industry sectors and occupations. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for employment, education, training and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

The overall effectiveness of Utah's workforce development system in relation to its strategic vision will be assessed through performance measures, meeting its negotiated outcomes, and recertification of affiliate and comprehensive one-stop centers. Specifically, the performance measures related to employment, education and training and supportive services:

#### Employment after second quarter exit

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Employment after fourth quarter exit

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Median earnings second quarter after exist

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Credential attainment rate

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Measurable skills gains

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Effectiveness in serving employers

- Adults
- Dislocated workers
- Youth
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

Effectiveness will also be assessed in terms of the membership of the State Workforce Development Board and its committee members. Each committee will maintain an action plan with goals that support Utah's state plan. Committees will report activities and accomplishments to the Board. In general, committee goals will focus on collaboration, partnering, building connections/relationships among partners and businesses in key industries throughout the state. The committees will incorporate economic information, individual agency goals, and performance data into their action plans.

#### Goals

Goal Focus: All-Encompassing Partnerships Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, organizations and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce and create opportunities for sustainable employment. Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

- Working with workforce system partners, particularly core and required partners and the State Workforce Development Board, to ensure current labor market information and performance data are utilized to inform the development of an effective and integrated workforce system that ensures support of diverse local economies throughout the state.
  - Assessed by: Completion and distribution of the data driven economic assessment of statewide workforce needs and performance measure outcome reports from core partners. The Operations Committee will oversee the development and completion of the annual economic assessment and performance measure reports. This is an ongoing activity, labor market information and performance measures are presented to the State Workforce Development Board and its committees annually.



- Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities.
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the recertification process. Agencies and partners assess their projects and programs related to supporting and promoting key occupations and industries to inform decision making and program improvement. They share this information at the state and local levels to inform decision making and program improvement. Part of the overall assessment includes effective partnering and leveraging resources. This is an ongoing activity.
- Promote and participate in opportunities to align, collaborate, and leverage resources among core and required partners, particularly in the comprehensive one-stop centers, to continually improve service to Utahns and ensure that anyone who comes to the office for assistance receives a service or an effective referral
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to demonstrate progress related to this goal. State Workforce Development Board committees will have goals in their action plans that relate to this goal and they will show the work they are doing to support it. This is an ongoing activity.

Goal Focus: Employers Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

- Ensuring business needs are met by collecting information from partner surveys, reports, and business or industry groups and identifying gaps or opportunities to improve services, including building stronger collaboration, alignment and leveraging resources
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the recertification process and Employment Engagement Workgroup. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to demonstrate how they are collecting and sharing feedback from surveys and reports and using the information to make decisions and implement improvements. This is an ongoing activity.
- Reaching out to employers to help design career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
  - Assessed by: The education system in Utah, at all levels, is supported by Occupational Advisory Committees that provide annual reports regarding the education system's classes, programs of study, and career pathways in terms of employer needs. This information can be shared with partners at the local level. In addition, the Utah State Board of Education has contracted with a company that gathers feedback on employer needs regarding specific occupations to help them design certification assessments at the K-12 level. This is an ongoing activity.
- Partnering to promote and support current work-based learning opportunities and coordinate to recruit more organizations to provide these types of training opportunities.

- Assessed by: Agencies and education partners assess their ability to promote work-based learning and recruit organizations to provide these experiences. The partners will share this information with State Workforce Development Board committees. This will also be assessed by the comprehensive one-stop certification process. This is an ongoing activity.
- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector
  - Assessed by: The State Workforce Development Board will describe recommendations or steps taken to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and marketing to the business sector. The core and required partners will work toward aligning marketing and outreach activities. The recommendations will be implemented and measured using individual agency standards all partners currently have in place. This is an ongoing activity.
- Involving State Workforce Development Board members in promoting business customer surveys, encouraging participation on board committees, and utilizing the business services available so they can provide feedback and ideas for continual improvement
  - Assessed by: The Operations Committee will oversee the quality and quantity of survey responses and other feedback received and ensure required performance measures are shared with the State Workforce Development Board. Implementation of the new business customer survey began in December 2019. Outreach will be to existing and potential employer customers so reports will be available beginning Fall 2020. The survey questions will be reviewed in Fall 2022 to ensure they are providing needed information for improvement. This is an ongoing activity.
- Providing quality labor market information, sector-based approaches and a well-trained talent pipeline for employers in order to increase their competitiveness
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the one-stop certification process. One-stop centers are required to demonstrate that they understand labor market information and how they provide the information to individuals.

Goal Focus: Education and Training Education and training partners will establish programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of businesses and organizations, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. Partnerships will facilitate clear connections for students to join Utah's workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors
  - Assessed by: Agencies and partners assess their projects and programs related to supporting and promoting talent pipelines in targeted industry sectors. They share information at the state and local levels to inform decision making and program improvement. It will also be assessed through the comprehensive one-stop recertification process in terms of how partners are working together to align, collaborate and support talent pipelines in targeted industry sectors. This is an ongoing activity.

- Ensuring all partners are aware of the educational offerings available and are recruiting and making referrals for WIOA-targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through Utah's Partner Referral System which was fully implemented during 2021. The system tracks referrals and outcomes for each office and includes all core and required partners. American Job Centers can use the system reports to provide insight about the effectiveness and appropriateness of partner referrals. This is also assessed through the comprehensive one-stop certification and recertification processes. This is an ongoing activity.
- Developing programs and strategies that help high-school students access high school Career and Technical Education, technical colleges, concurrent enrollment, and other partnership pathways to post-secondary Career and Technical Education programs while in high school and ensuring that all partners are aware of the programs
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed by the number of high school students concentrating and completing Career and Technical Education programs while in high school, the number of high school students enrolled in and completing technical college programs, and the number enrolled in and completing concurrent enrollment Career and Technical Education courses. A report will be provided annually to the State Workforce Development Board. It will also be assessed through the certification and recertification process where partners demonstrate that all staff are trained and understand where to find information about partner programs. This is an ongoing activity.
- Ensuring core and required partners are aligning, coordinating and collaborating as career pathway initiatives are developed and implemented, particularly in areas where there is a comprehensive one-stop center
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to demonstrate how they are aligning, coordinating and collaborating to implement and support career pathway initiatives. They will show how they are connecting to and supporting projects that support targeted occupations and industries. This is an ongoing activity.

Goal Focus: Workforce Utah will provide education and training options that provide the skills and competencies required to meet employer and job seeker needs. Strong partnerships will enable job seekers to find sustainable employment and employers to recruit and retain quality employees. This will involve:

- Increasing awareness for the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce and providing supplementary preparation and/or training
  - Assessed by: Utah will explore utilizing performance measurement options such as the number of core partner customers who receive supplementary training and have successful job placements. These reports will be presented to the State Workforce Development Board annually when they become available.

- Leveraging core and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting
  - Assessed by: The required performance measures will be used as a tool to assess the effectiveness of partners working together to help job seekers understand what they need to do to meet employer needs. In addition, assessment will be provided through the recertification process as comprehensive one-stop centers show the work partners are doing related to this goal. These reports will be presented to the State Workforce Development Board annually.
- Partners will coordinate and collaborate to develop career pathways that support ongoing skill development including apprenticeship, work-based learning, customized training
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the comprehensive one-stop recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to demonstrate how they are coordinating and collaborating to develop career pathways that support skill development. This is an ongoing activity.
- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate in outreach to employed, underemployed, and unemployed individuals
  - Assessed by: Surveys and other feedback tools and methods partners use to ensure individual needs are met. These reports will be shared during one-stop center partner meetings and recertification. Partners will share information with the State Workforce Development Board. This is an ongoing activity.
- Ensuring current labor market information is accessible to individuals to inform them about skills, credentials, wages, and jobs in demand
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the one-stop certification process. One-stop centers are required to demonstrate that they understand labor market information and how they provide the information to individuals.

Goal Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment Government and community partners will leverage and align resources to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment so that at-risk populations have greater opportunities in the workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Ensuring partners have strong relationships at the local level so education partners connect these populations to community services that support them
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the comprehensive one-stop center recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to demonstrate how they are working together to ensure education partners connect the priority population to needed services. This is an ongoing activity.
- Partnering to develop and implement comprehensive strategies that connect these populations to services and ensure best practices are implemented to access services, coordinate outreach methods, and messaging to target populations
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the comprehensive one-stop center recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to describe

the strategies they are using to connect these populations to services. They must also show how they are developing and implementing best practices to provide access to services, coordinate outreach methods and messaging to target populations. This is an ongoing activity.

- Ensuring partners develop a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make adjustments to outreach strategies in serving at-risk populations.
  - Assessed by: This will be assessed through the comprehensive one-stop center recertification process. Comprehensive one-stop centers will be required to describe their processes of continuous improvement which includes program efficacy to make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies for at-risk populations. This is an ongoing activity.

### c. State Strategy

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the State's strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. These strategies must take into account the State's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a) above. Include discussion of specific strategies to address the needs of populations provided in Section (a).

**1. Describe the strategies the State will implement, including industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations and career pathways, as required by WIOA section 101(d)(3)(B), (D). "Career pathway" is defined at WIOA section 3(7) and includes registered apprenticeship. "In-demand industry sector or occupation" is defined at WIOA section 3(23)**

**2. Describe the strategies the State will use to align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available to the State to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with the strategic vision and goals described above. Also describe strategies to strengthen workforce development activities in regard to weaknesses identified in section II(a)(2)**

#### State Strategy

##### Utah's Strategies to Achieve its Strategic Vision and Goals

Utah's strategies take into account its economic, workforce, workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in the section above. Utah's Unified Plan includes strategies to achieve its overall vision and goals for its workforce development system. The strategies are flexible to accommodate the state's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a). The plan includes specific strategies to address the needs of populations described in Section (a). The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships, and its resources to implement strategies that support operations to provide services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's State Workforce Development Board has standing committees to

ensure Utah's goals and vision are met. These include Youth, Apprenticeships, Services to Individuals with Disabilities, Career Pathways, and Operations.

### Vision

A strong economy, now and in the future, depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will enhance and expand collaborative efforts with businesses and organizations, educational institutions, community partners, and government agencies through business development and partnerships related to key industry sectors and occupations. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for employment, education, training and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

### Goals

#### Goal Focus All-Encompassing Partnerships

Utah will partner across the WIOA core and required partners, education, economic development, businesses, organizations and other programs to coordinate, align strategies, leverage resources and work together to develop Utah's workforce and create opportunities for sustainable employment. Utah will strengthen its partnerships by:

- Working with workforce system partners, particularly core and required partners and the State Workforce Development Board, to ensure current labor market information and performance data are utilized to inform the development of an effective and integrated workforce system that ensures support of diverse local economies throughout the state
  - Strategy: The economic assessment of statewide workforce needs will be used by the State Workforce Development Board committees to ensure that their recommendations are based on Utah's workforce needs. The State Workforce Development Board and its committees will receive a report on Utah's statewide and sub-state economies and partner performance measures annually. The Department of Workforce Services staff provides current information on its website, presentations and training, and responds to data requests for workforce system partners as needed. Labor market information is incorporated into staff training for all core partners. Labor market information and performance data are available to and used by partner leaders at all levels to make decisions.
- Leveraging state funding resources to support the promotion of key occupational clusters and industry sectors identified through economic analysis and input from employers, and utilizing these resources to support the state workforce development activities
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee, which has representation from business and all core and required partners, will ensure this goal is incorporated into the one-stop center certification process. It also supports the maintenance of the WIOA Partner MOU/IFA to ensure state funding resources are leveraged to promote this goal. The MOU/IFA was updated in November 2021. Core partners will coordinate at the local level to support mutual at-risk individuals in education and employment goals that align with key industries and occupations. Committees and all partners will support and promote opportunities in these sectors through sharing information about initiatives and projects during meetings and networking. This is an ongoing activity.

- Promote and participate in opportunities to align, collaborate, and leverage resources among core and required partners, particularly in the comprehensive one-stop centers, to continually improve service to individuals and ensure that anyone who comes to the office for assistance receives a service or an effective referral
  - Strategy: Overall strategies include setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data, and working together to resolve problems and addressing gaps. It also includes collaborating and coordinating on training, outreach and feedback. Partners will utilize existing committees, workgroups, and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate. The State Workforce Development Board and its committees will hold regular meetings, as required by Utah's plan, and clearly outline all partners' responsibilities so they can be held accountable or adjusted as required. These are ongoing activities.
    - The SWDB committees provide a forum for workforce system partners to share information, promote best practices, and develop recommendations. Information will be shared with the full State Workforce Development Board as well as comprehensive one-stop centers
    - Comprehensive one-stop center partners will work toward sharing information and refining the current referral process
    - The Data and Reports Workgroup, under the Operations Committee, will continue to explore opportunities to develop a common point of entry for customers that streamlines the process and eliminates duplication by utilizing a universal collection application that connects to all core partner systems
    - Core partners will continue to explore opportunities to co-locate core program partners and services
    - Workforce system partners will work together to set collaborative performance goals, share information/data and work together to resolve problems and address gaps
    - State Workforce Development Board committees and comprehensive one-stop center leadership will ensure there are processes for sharing information among partners to provide a more holistic experience for the at-risk populations and provide seamless service
    - State Workforce Development Board committee members will visit one-stop centers to help identify best practices and gaps in services and make recommendations for alignment of partner resources
    - Core partners will continue to collaborate and align procedures for one-stop certifications, including recertification
    - The core partners, housed under the Department of Workforce Services, will continue to meet monthly for policy coordination meetings to ensure partner coordination and alignment. They will also explore opportunities for program

integration. In addition, the Workforce Development Division coordinates policy with the Eligibility Services Division.

- Through their oversight of the recertification process, the Operations Committee will ensure core, required and optional one-stop partners collaborate and that they are not duplicating services

Goal Focus: Employers Utah will involve employers directly in the workforce development system by utilizing and leveraging existing partnerships and expanding opportunities for them to participate in developing new partnerships and aligning programs. This will include:

- Ensuring business needs are met by collecting information from partner surveys, reports, and business or industry groups and identifying gaps or opportunities to improve services, including building stronger collaboration, alignment and leveraging resources
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee employer engagement workgroup will gather information and review partners' current employer engagement processes. They will identify gaps and explore new ways to better meet employers' workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry partners, including:
    - Ensuring all partners are aligned and coordinated in educating employers about individuals with barriers, with an emphasis on the targeted industries
    - Ensuring that partners are engaging with employers and high demand industries needs are being addressed within each of the economic regions
    - Exploring ways partners can leverage Utah Office of Rehabilitation's current coordination with employers
    - Identifying ways partners can participate in supporting industry at the secondary (K-12) and post-secondary education levels
    - Identifying ways partners can coordinate, align with and utilize Workforce Development Division workforce development specialists, Utah Office of Rehabilitation business relation specialists, labor market information and UWORKS labor exchange system to support employer needs
    - Developing recommendations for a process to coordinate efforts to understand employer needs from a full workforce development system point of view, coordinating partner efforts as well as considering new methods
    - Exploring developing a plan for coordinating and collaborating core, education, and economic development partners' outreach to employers
- Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee will gather information on current activities regarding career pathway projects and programs and make recommendations for replicating successful activities, sharing information and providing support when gaps are identified. The committee will work to help partners align and coordinate with existing employer/education pathway efforts such as Technical Education Advisory Committees. This is an ongoing activity.



- The Career Pathways Committee will stay informed about and supported partners' outreach to employers for assistance in designing career pathways for use in secondary education (K-12), Adult Education and post-secondary education
- Partnering to promote and support current work-based learning opportunities and coordinate to recruit more organizations to provide these types of training opportunities
  - Strategy: Leveraging partner communication channels to promote available internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training that companies provide as well as contacting companies interested in providing these types of training opportunities. Examples of current strategies include:
    - Supporting workforce system partner conferences such as Women in Trades
    - Collaborating and aligning outreach to at-risk individuals and companies
    - Workforce system partners and State Workforce Development Board supporting organizations that promote work-based learning such as the Electrical Training Alliance
    - Workforce system partners sharing information and promoting events such as job fairs, mentoring activities and training workshops
    - Training partner staff to refer job seeker customers to work-based learning opportunities and to refer interested employers to partners who can help them establish work-based learning opportunities
    - Core and required partners coordinating and collaborating outreach and marketing to the business sector
    - Encouraging employers and other workforce system partners to post work-based learning opportunities on [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov)
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will gather information and review partners' current employer engagement processes. They will identify gaps and explore new ways to better meet employers' workforce needs and achieve the goals of industry partners, including:
    - Ensuring all partners are aligned and coordinated in educating employers about individuals with barriers, with an emphasis on the targeted industries
    - Exploring ways all partners can leverage Utah System of Rehabilitation's current coordination with employers
    - Identifying ways all partners can coordinate, align with and utilize the Workforce Development Division's workforce development specialists, Utah Office of Rehabilitation business relations specialists, labor market information, and UWORKS labor exchange system to support employer needs

- Involving State Workforce Development Board members in promoting business customer surveys, encouraging participation on board committees, and utilizing the business services available so they can provide feedback and ideas for continual improvement
- Providing quality labor market information, sector-based approaches and a well-trained talent pipeline for employers in order to increase their competitiveness
  - Strategy: The workforce system partners, under the guidance of the Operations Committee, will continue their efforts to align, coordinate, and leverage resources related to employer outreach. The comprehensive one-stop centers will extend these efforts to the local level so partners can work together to provide these services to employers in their communities.

Goal Focus: Education and Training Education and training partners will establish programs that meet both the current and emerging needs of businesses and organizations, including an emphasis on real-life applicability of skills development. Partnerships will facilitate clear connections for students to join Utah's workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors
  - Strategy: State Workforce Development Board committees, working with partners such as the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, will create and/or support recommendations and steps for developing a talent pipeline in targeted industry sectors. Committees and partners will support state legislative efforts in targeted industry sectors, such as Utah Works and Silicon Slopes. This is an ongoing activity.
- Ensuring all partners are aware of the educational offerings available and are recruiting and making referrals for WIOA-targeted populations, specifically those with barriers to employment
  - Strategy: The comprehensive one-stop centers will develop strategies at the local level that support this goal, including utilizing the Partner Referral System. This is an ongoing activity.
- Developing programs and strategies that help high-school students connect to concurrent enrollment, high school Career and Technical Education, and other partnership pathways to post-secondary Career and Technical Education programs and ensuring that all partners are aware of the programs
  - Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee will work with the Youth committee to identify ways to support comprehensive one-stop center efforts to connect high school students to education and career pathways. The committees will work together to establish best practices and make recommendations to local partner leadership. This is an ongoing activity.
- Ensuring core and required partners are aligning, coordinating and collaborating as career pathway initiatives are developed and implemented, particularly in areas where there is a comprehensive one-stop center

- Strategy: The Career Pathways Committee will proactively coordinate with the Talent Ready Utah program initiatives to ensure partner staff are aware of and understand how they can support these initiatives at the local level, and ensure that customers, particularly those with barriers, are able to participate. During 2022, the Career Pathways Committee will create a workgroup to develop guides providing information on how to participate in Talent Ready Utah program activities and share success stories.

Focus: Workforce Utah will provide education and training options that provide the skills and competencies required to meet employer and job seeker needs. Strong partnerships will enable job seekers to find sustainable employment and employers to recruit and retain quality employees. This will involve:

- Increasing awareness of the job-readiness skills necessary for competition in the workforce and providing supplemental preparation and/or training
  - Strategy: Through the comprehensive one-stop center recertification process, core partners will ensure they align and coordinate their job readiness skill building activities and resources for customers. The Operations Committee and State Workforce Development Board will review their efforts through the certification process and make recommendations for improvement. This is an ongoing activity.
    - The Department of Workforce Services, Utah State Board of Education, Division of Services to People with Disabilities, and community providers collaborate to support students with the most significant disabilities to access work readiness training and employment prior to graduating from high school. This is an ongoing activity.
    - The Youth Committee will have the opportunity to utilize and provide input for current career-readiness workshops that target youth and can be utilized by all partners to help youth improve their job readiness and soft skills. This is an ongoing activity.
- Leveraging core and required partner programs to increase awareness of the workforce skills employers are requesting
  - Strategy: The comprehensive one-stop centers will develop strategies at the local level that support this goal. Conduct a business customer survey and share the results with partners. This is an ongoing activity.
- Partners will coordinate and collaborate to develop career pathways that support ongoing skill development including apprenticeship, work-based learning, customized training.
  - Strategy: The State Workforce Development Board and its committees, as well as the comprehensive one-stop centers, provide a forum for sharing information, aligning and collaborating, and developing best practices. Career Pathway committee members plan to visit local comprehensive one-stop centers to gather information regarding best practices that can be shared statewide. This is an ongoing activity.

- Partnering to coordinate and collaborate in outreach and to employed, underemployed, and unemployed individuals
  - Strategy: The State Workforce Development Board and its committees, as well as the comprehensive one-stop centers, provide a forum for sharing information, aligning and collaborating, and developing best practices. Career Pathway committee members plan to visit local comprehensive one-stop centers to gather information regarding best practices that can be shared statewide. This includes encouraging individuals to create an account on [jobs.utah.gov](https://jobs.utah.gov) as part of their job search activities. This is an ongoing activity.
- Ensuring current labor market information is accessible to individuals to inform them about skills, credentials, wages, and jobs in demand
  - Strategy: The Department of Workforce Services staff provides current information on its website, presentations and training, and responds to data requests for all workforce system partners as needed. It is incorporated into staff training for all core partners. This is an ongoing activity.

Focus: Populations with Barriers to Employment Government and community partners will leverage and align resources to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment so that at-risk populations have greater opportunities in the workforce. This will be accomplished by:

- Ensuring partners have strong relationships at the local level so education partners connect these populations to community services that support them
  - Strategy: The State Workforce Development Board committees will enhance partnerships by convening stakeholders, sharing ongoing efforts during regularly scheduled meetings, and compiling comprehensive one-stop best practices regarding strengthening partner relationships and connecting at-risk populations to community services. This is an ongoing activity.
    - All partner staff, statewide, have been trained and are using the Partner Referral system for direct referrals and follow up.
- Partners developing and implementing comprehensive strategies that connect at-risk populations to services and ensure best practices are implemented to access services, coordinate outreach methods, and messaging to target populations
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will oversee the implementation of the Partner Referral System. The committee will:
    - Gather information from comprehensive one-stop centers regarding implementation during 2021 and evaluate its effectiveness during 2022
    - Oversee improvements to the referral pathways and processes to ensure one-stop centers provide consistent and seamless services for mutual customers. This will be an ongoing activity accomplished through the one-stop recertification process

- At the local level comprehensive one-stop centers will encourage referrals and client interventions at any point of entry, refine career pathways to meet the needs of at-risk populations through engagement with employers, focus on high demand industries, and strengthen connections with post-secondary and training institutions. These are ongoing activities.
- Ensuring partners develop a cycle of continuous improvement to assess program efficacy and make real-time adjustments to outreach strategies in serving at-risk populations
  - Strategy: The Operations Committee will oversee the evaluation of core and required partner performance expectations and make recommendations for continuous improvement that will be implemented and assessed through required performance measures. This is an ongoing activity.

(2) Utah's strategies take into account its economic, workforce, workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in the section above.

Utah's Unified Plan includes strategies to achieve its vision and goals. The strategies are flexible to accommodate the state's economic, workforce, and workforce development, education and training activities and analysis provided in Section (a). The plan includes specific strategies to address the needs of populations described in Section (a). The foundation of Utah's plan is built upon utilizing data, partnerships, and resources to implement strategies that support operations to provide services to individuals and employers. Utah is committed to changing and/or adjusting its strategies as needed to meet the state's workforce needs. Utah's State Workforce Development Board has standing committees to ensure Utah's goals and vision are met. These include Youth, Apprenticeships, Services to Individuals with Disabilities, Career Pathways, and Operations.

Utah's Career Pathway Committee's goals and activities include:

- Providing a forum for partners from around the state to exchange ideas and share best practices, explore how they can align, share resources and collaborate
- Making recommendations that include the Six Key Elements of the Career Pathways Toolkit and requirements by WIOA Section 101(d)(3)(B), (D) to the State Workforce Development Board regarding how the Board can best support a coordinated and collaborative state career pathway system
- Supporting Utah's sector strategies that are aligned with Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity's industry clusters, including supporting career pathway initiatives that align with targeted industries and occupations in demand and coordinating these initiatives with comprehensive one-stop center career pathway efforts
- Referring to and using the definitions of "career pathway" in WIOA Section 3(7) and "industry sector or occupation" in WIOA Section 3(23)
- Establishing workgroups to explore and provide recommendations to the State Workforce Development Board regarding the potential benefits of cohort training program models that support key occupational clusters and industry sectors

- Providing ongoing support of one-stop center activities at the local level including partnering with education to meet the needs of individuals living in rural areas
- Coordinating with the Youth and Apprenticeship committees to promote the sharing of information pertinent to pathway work-based learning with one-stop center resources
- Coordinating with Career and Technical Education partners to support one-stop center access to Career and Technical Education programs and pathways, including promoting work experience opportunities and providing outreach for these programs to partners, businesses, students, and job seekers to help establish communication channels between them

Utah uses a variety of strategies to align the core programs, one-stop center partners and other resources to achieve fully integrated customer services consistent with its strategic vision and goals. The Operations Committee oversees these strategies, their goals and activities include:

- Creating workforce development activities in response to gaps identified in the state's workforce analysis
- Setting collaborative performance goals, sharing information/data and working together to resolve problems, and addressing gaps
- Collaborating and coordinating on training, outreach and feedback by utilizing existing committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when appropriate
- Supporting the one-stop certification process and overseeing the certification criteria
- Ensuring all core and required partners have representation on the committee, as well as representation from State Workforce Development Board business members
- Supporting the maintenance of the WIOA Partner MOU/IFA
- Overseeing strategies to engage education and training providers, including training providers on the state's Eligible Training Provider List, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system
- Overseeing core partners' efforts to utilize a braided funding model to leverage existing resources in providing services for common customers
- Ensuring common performance outcomes are reported to the State Workforce Development Board annually
- Overseeing core partners efforts to explore sharing information and refining referral processes. This includes working toward development of a common point of entry for individuals to access a universal collection application that connects to all core partner systems with the intent of streamlining the process and eliminating duplication
- Overseeing efforts to explore additional opportunities for co-location of core program partners and services
- Coordinating with other committees

Utah's Youth Committee provides information and assists with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth. The committee includes employers and community-based organizations with demonstrated records of success in service-eligible youth. The committee's goals and activities include:

- Sharing information and providing best practices for one-stop centers related to placing at-risk youth in internships, work-based learning, apprenticeships, and supporting their employment goals
- Establishing a workgroup to explore ways to improve employers' participation in work-based learning forums and developing innovative ways to inform at-risk youth, including youth with disabilities, of opportunities available to them
- Holding regular committee meetings to create a forum for sharing information, collaboration, and connecting with external committees working to serve youth so groups can align their efforts
- Ensuring committee members regularly receive current information on career and education planning resources and Career and Technical Education pathways
- Inviting core and required Career and Technical Education partners to report their local efforts to enhance, align, and coordinate partnerships, best practices and recommendations for improvement, so they can be shared with comprehensive one-stop centers
- Sharing information about opportunities to increase access to pre-employment transition services and other work readiness programs geared toward youth with disabilities and other barriers

The Apprenticeships committee's goals and activities include:

- Supporting Utah's Apprenticeship Commissioner
- Maintaining Utah's apprenticeship website
- Supporting and participating in Utah's Apprenticeship Week activities, the K-12 counselor conference, and other partner events
- Leveraging partner funding resources to support participants in apprenticeships
- Supporting comprehensive one-stop centers
- Supporting projects such as the state expansion grant, pre-apprenticeship projects, and other pilot apprenticeships projects
- Providing a forum for partners to share information, identify best practices, and collaborate, including education partners such as Career and Technical Education, Utah System of Higher Education, and employers

The Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee provides information and assists with operational and other issues related to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. The committee goals and activities include:

- Supporting programmatic and physical access to the services, programs and activities of the one-stop delivery system
- Supporting delivery of one-stop center staff training regarding accommodations for individuals with disabilities
- Making recommendations to one-stop center staff for providing job search assistance for individuals with disabilities
- Coordinating with other committees to provide mentoring events for youth with disabilities, job fairs, and state sponsored internships
- Facilitating and aligning partnerships such as Choose to Work
- Improving connections with Career and Technical Education partners to share resources and support initiatives that increase opportunities for youth and work-based learning
- Exploring opportunities to further align, connect, and collaborate on current services provided to employers such as educating employers about individuals with barriers

### III. Operational Planning Elements

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include an Operational Planning Elements section that supports the State's strategy and the system-wide vision described in Section II(c) above. Unless otherwise noted, all Operational Planning Elements apply to Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan as well as to core programs. This section must include—

#### a. State Strategy Implementation

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include—

##### 1. State Board Functions

Describe how the State board will implement its functions under section 101(d) of WIOA (i.e., provide a description of Board operational structures and decision making processes to ensure such functions are carried out).

### III. Operational Planning Elements

#### State Strategy Implementation

#### State Board Functions

Utah's State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) has been actively implementing Utah's WIOA plan during the past four years. The successful implementation is primarily due to the enthusiastic and active chair and the Executive Committee members. The Utah SWDB members and committees have a strong supportive structure established through Utah law, bylaws (<https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/swdbbylaws.pdf>), and support from partner agency leadership and staff. In addition to Guiding Principles, Statutory Requirements, application processes, etc. the SWBD has the opportunity to:



- Implement innovative strategies by focusing on employer engagement, strengthening core programs, dissemination of best practices, and promoting effective use of technology to enhance service delivery
- Establish and maintain standing committees. The two required committees are Youth and Services to Individuals with Disabilities. There are three additional committees which include a Career Pathways Committee, an Operations Committee, and an Apprenticeships Committee
- Improve system alignment and connections by serving youth with disabilities and aligning career pathways and industry and sector partnerships
- Support established and new career pathway initiatives as well as industry and sector partnerships, using its influence on secondary education reform initiatives where career pathways are emerging, and in leveraging business and industry groups to establish sector partnerships
- Support skills development programs through a representative of a joint labor-management partnership in the SWDB contingent to validate pre-apprenticeship and skills development bridge program offerings for entry into state-approved apprenticeship training
- Access local labor market analysis. The SWDB is responsible for completing a comprehensive analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor market trends, educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment
- Define requirements and certify one-stop centers. One-stop centers are the public face of the workforce system. They are the central connecting point for all of the programs and services that must be coordinated and aligned to successfully meet the goals of Utah's Plan
- Engage community systems by convening, brokering, and leveraging with business, community, education, and agency partners
- Evaluate performance measures designed to measure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the One-Stop and Youth service delivery systems

The SWDB led the development of Utah's Unified Plan and is guided by the vision, strategy, and goals of the plan, which are below.

### Vision

A strong economy, now and in the future, depends on a world-class workforce. Utah will enhance and expand collaborative efforts with businesses and organizations, educational institutions, community partners, and government agencies through business development and partnerships related to key industry sectors and occupations. Through its implementation of WIOA, Utah will increase access to and opportunities for employment, education, training and support services that individuals—particularly those with barriers to employment—need to succeed in the workforce.

### Strategy

- Focus on achieving Utah's vision and goals.

- Utilize data, partnerships and resources as a foundation to implement strategies to support operations in providing services to individuals and employers.
- Commit to adjusting strategies to meet the state's current workforce needs.
- Workforce development activities include:
  - Identify targeted industry sectors and occupations; align programs and services to support them; and ensure involvement from business and education partners
  - Set collaborative performance goals, share information/data and work together to resolve problems and address gaps
  - Collaborate and coordinate on training, marketing and customer feedback
  - Utilize existing and external committees, workgroups and programs while working to align and share resources when it is appropriate
  - Hold regular Board and committee meetings as required by Utah's plan

The State Workforce Development Board utilizes the agency, community, education and employer partnerships:

#### Partnerships

Core partners ensure that employment and training services are coordinated and complementary, and that individuals can acquire the skills and credentials that meet employer needs.

- Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
- Youth Program
- Wagner-Peyser Act programs
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs
- One-Stop Partners

Comprehensive one-stop center partners are responsible for creating a seamless, individual-focused delivery system; collaborating and aligning services to enhance access for individuals and businesses.

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Veterans job counseling, training and placement services
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Community Services Block Grant employment and training activities
- Unemployment Compensation programs

- Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, Part A (TANF)
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program (Futures Through Training)
- Indian Training Education Center

There are clear responsibilities outlined for State Workforce Development Board members:

The Board members shall act in the best interests of the State of Utah. The following are outlined expectations and commitments of each member:

- **Attendance and Punctuality:** Members attend quarterly Board meetings and designated committee meetings. The State Workforce Development Board and committee chairs shall start and conclude each meeting in a timely fashion. A minimum of five hours each quarter is the expected quarterly commitment of each member. The implementation and maintenance of the state's Unified Plan will require more hours from committee chairs and active committee members.
- **State Workforce Development Board Meeting Schedule:** The meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each quarter.
- **Committee meetings:** The committee chairs schedule meetings as often as necessary. The frequency depends on the work the committee is engaged in. The committee meetings could be held monthly for periods of time or a minimum of two quarterly meetings.
- **State Workforce Development Board Meetings:** One of the two quarterly committee meetings is typically held on the day of the State Board meeting, usually between 10:00 a.m. and noon, and the board meets from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated. The location of the SWDB meetings is announced and meeting materials are sent to members in advance and posted on the website at: <http://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html>
- **The Executive Committee** meets at least quarterly, usually on the day of the full Board meeting.

The State Workforce Development Board members join committees and workgroups:

#### Committees

There are five committees under the State Workforce Development Board:

- Youth
- Services to Individuals with Disabilities
- Operations
- Career Pathways
- Apprenticeships

The chairs from all five committees serve on the Executive Committee.

The committee chairs have clear expectations:

- Attend State Workforce Development Board Meetings and report on committee work
- Become familiar with the Unified Plan, specifically sections and goals that relate to the committee work
- Attend Executive Committee meetings, held prior to the Board meetings, to assist with agenda items, receive information and reports from partners, approve proposals, report on committee work, and coordinate with other chairs
- Hold at least one committee meeting quarterly
- Oversee committee workgroups and monitor progress on assignments
- Utilize agency staff to answer questions and provide support to the committee
- Reach out to colleagues and associates in their organizations, networks and communities to promote, collaborate, and attain feedback on committee work
- Represent their committee members

The State Workforce Development Board committee members have clear responsibilities, they will:

- Provide reports and make recommendations to the Board, the Board will approve recommendations and provide feedback to the committee.
- Determine whether a workgroup should be established to complete a goal. If a workgroup is created, the committee will ensure the workgroup understands the assignment(s), provide instructions and deadlines. The committee will also receive, provide feedback and approve work on assignments/recommendations
- Attend and participate in committee meetings
- Utilize their networks to promote, collaborate and attain feedback on committee work

Committees can create temporary work groups of experts, operations staff, employers, and other stakeholders to assist them in meeting their goals.

- Workgroups can be short term or long term
- Workgroups can overlap across committees
- Workgroup members can be anyone from the public, private or nonprofit sectors as appropriate

#### Utah's Workforce Development System

The governor, in accordance with Section 106(d) of WIOA, retains and designates Utah as a "Single State Local Area." Utah is well situated and prepared to continue delivering integrated workforce services and will align its governance and administrative structure to set policy direction and establish realistic performance goals. The SWDB serves as the advisory body to provide guidance, oversight and evaluation to ensure programs remain fully responsive to Utah's economic development and labor market needs. State agencies with core and required programs will continue, in a coordinated

approach, to implement specific workforce development programs through the integrated services delivery systems within local areas.

In terms of section 101(d) of WIOA, the State Workforce Development Board will assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the Unified Plan through committees overseen by the SWDB and chaired by SWDB members that fulfill assignments related to these activities. The Board reviews and approves Utah's Unified State plan, including all modifications during committee meetings, full Board meetings, and email communications.

The SWBD leads the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in Utah through its regular meetings and its Board led and core/required partner staffed committees by:

- Identifying barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system
- Developing strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment
- Creating strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system
- Developing and expanding strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system, which includes providing assistance to one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services. This also includes training services and supportive services to ensure effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers
- Developing strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system
- Establishing and updating comprehensive state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state as required under section 116(b)
- Identifying and disseminating information on best practices, which includes:
  - The effective operation of one-stop centers relating to business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment
  - Training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis and the effective use of direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathway

- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in such a system
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to—and improve the quality of—services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system including such improvements to:
  - Enhance digital literacy skills as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as “digital literacy skills”)
  - Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized post-secondary credentials by participants
  - Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals
  - Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas
- The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measurement and reporting processes to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs
- The preparation of annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d)
- The development of statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15€ of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.s>C/ 491-2(e)
- The development of such other policies that may promote statewide objectives for, and enhance the performance of, the workforce development system in the state

## 2. Implementation of State Strategy

Describe how the lead State agency with responsibility for the administration of each core program or a Combined Plan partner program included in this plan will implement the State's Strategies identified in Section II(c). above. This must include a description of—

### A. Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

Describe the activities the entities carrying out the respective core programs will fund to implement the State's strategies. Also, describe how such activities will be aligned across the core programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan and among the entities administering the programs, including using co-enrollment and other strategies, as appropriate.

#### **Implementation of State Strategy**

##### Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

The lead state agencies responsible for administering each core program included in Utah's plan will implement the outlined strategies.

#### Core Program Activities to Implement Utah's Strategy

Utah's core partners are funding activities to implement the state strategies. The activities are aligned across core programs. Core partners are committed to:

- Continuing to maximize existing infrastructure to develop a common registration and data repository. The Data and Reports Workgroup that reports to the Operations Committee will continue to explore opportunities for enhancements/development related to a common registration form and data repository process. This is a long-term project that will be developed and implemented as resources and opportunities are available.
- Utilizing a braided funding model to leverage existing resources in providing services for common customers. These efforts will be ongoing including referrals and client interventions at any point of entry (Workforce Development Division, Office of Rehabilitation or Adult Education), refinement of career pathways to meet the needs through engagement with employers, high demand industry and post-secondary and training institutions with a focus on at-risk clients. This is an ongoing activity.
- Providing cross training to core and required partner staff to increase awareness of programs and services that are available to continue increasing co-enrollment. Utah will continue to explore expanding case management system interfaces with core partners to identify common or mutual clients. Staff training will be ongoing and recommendations for expanding case management system interfaces will be reported to the Operations Committee by the Data and Reports Workgroup.
- Supporting the criteria for the certified one-stop centers by serving on the Operations Committee which oversees the certification criteria. This is an ongoing process as one-stop centers are recertified every three years and the certification criteria is reviewed and updated every two years (the latest update was January 2021).
- Ensuring all core partners are represented on all State Workforce Development Board committees
- Exploring opportunities for additional co-location of core program partners. The Operations Committee will lead the efforts to explore additional opportunities for co-location of core program partners and services and make recommendations to the State Workforce Development Board. This is an ongoing activity.
- Utilizing the Partner Referral System, to enhance partner referrals. Partner staff will use the system to make referrals and new employees will receive training.
- Identifying existing career pathway initiatives to ensure collaboration and alignment. Ensuring career pathway development and initiatives for the key occupations and target industries are the priority. This is an ongoing activity.

## B. Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be aligned with programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other optional one-stop partners and activities provided under employment, training (including Registered Apprenticeships), education (including career and technical education), human services and other programs not covered by the plan, as appropriate, assuring coordination of, and avoiding duplication among these activities.

#### **Alignment with Activities outside the Plan**

The strategies outlined in (A) will be aligned with the programs and activities provided by required one-stop partners and other partners as appropriate, assuring coordination of and avoiding duplication among these activities. Workforce system partner activities, including those outside the plan, will be aligned as part of the certification and recertification processes.

The State Workforce Development Board committees have representation from business, and all core and required partners. These committees are responsible for ensuring that one-stop programs and services are aligned, coordinated, and non-duplicating. The committees are also responsible for identifying issues and making recommendations to work toward resolving them. This includes:

##### **Education & Training**

- Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) includes Career and Technical Education
- Adult Education
- Utah State Board of Education (Utah State Board of Education) includes Career and Technical Education

##### **Department of Workforce Services Divisions**

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Workforce Development Division
- Unemployment Insurance (UI)

##### **Workforce System Partners, Programs & Initiatives**

- The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity
- STEM Action Center
- Utah State Workforce Development Board (SWDB)
- Representation from the SWDB Career Pathways Committee
- Veterans and Military Initiatives
- Employment First Initiative
- Choose to Work (CTW)
- Work Success
- Talent Ready Utah



- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplement Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)
- Community Services Block Grant
- Job Corps
- National Farmworkers Jobs program (Futures Through Training)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Easterseals-Goodwill Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Medicaid Community Engagement

The local one-stop centers will focus on at-risk populations to assist them with career opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities which, overall, increases the available local workforce talent.

During the 2019 legislative session, HB 280 created a Utah Commissioner of Apprenticeship Programs to be housed within the Department of Workforce Services. The duties of the Commissioner include promoting and educating the public on apprenticeship opportunities, coordinating and collaborating with key stakeholders and providing an annual written report of apprenticeship program activities to the legislature.

The overall goals are to increase awareness of apprenticeship opportunities for youth and adults as being a valuable pathway to success; promote apprenticeship opportunities to employers as a valuable talent recruitment, retention and workforce development strategy, and identify high-quality apprenticeship programs and best practices that can be shared.

By identifying, expanding and promoting high-quality industry driven apprenticeship programs, we will assist in filling the skills gap, create a pipeline and provide a qualified workforce to meet the hiring demands of Utah employers.

The local one-stop centers will offer annual cross training opportunities to the core and required partner staff who work directly with the public. Training will be scheduled, such as the referral process, when a need is identified by any of the partners. Recommendations for enhancements or expanding the case management system interfaces that relate to the functions of the local one-stop centers will be submitted to the state Data and Reports Workgroup.

The local one-stop centers will continue to work closely with local career pathway development efforts and initiatives. This includes working closely with Career and Technical Education partners. In addition, the one-stop centers are developing strong partnerships through existing workgroups to ensure that local and high demand industries' needs are coordinated with post-secondary institutions.

The local one-stop centers will continue regular coordination meetings with partners to ensure that all referrals have accurate and timely information for targeted populations. In addition, local one-stop centers, coordinating with local partners, will ensure that new staff are trained and utilizing the referral system effectively.

## C. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan, and required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services (e.g. transportation), to individuals, including those populations identified in section II(a)(1)(B), and individuals in remote areas. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

### **Coordination, Alignment, and Provision of Services to Individuals**

Partners will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, individual-centered services, which include access to transportation, referrals to physical and mental health assistance, housing assistance, child and dependent care, and income support to individuals and populations identified in Section II(a)(1)(B). The activities will conform to the statutory requirements of each program. This will occur through one-stop center partnerships, other partnerships, recommendations from State Workforce Development Board committees, and additional assignments sponsored by the Board as outlined throughout this plan.

Core and required partners serve on the Operations Committee which is charged with developing and implementing the certification process and collecting and analyzing information for the one-stop requirements. Through committee work, the partners will identify and act on opportunities to enhance and coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality customer centered services, as well as supportive services, to at-risk individuals including populations identified in section II.a.1.B of this plan. The Operations Committee is also charged with recommending training and outreach strategies that are further developed and implemented by the partners as appropriate. Training core partner staff and developing outreach strategies to targeted groups will help ensure that individuals receive the services they need. In section II(a)(1)(B) Utah has identified the following:

- Utah needs to continue increasing its Labor Force Participation Rate by tapping into workers who left the labor market during the pandemic and upscaling their skills as required by employers to meet the needs of the state.
- Utah will focus on disengaged individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

The Utah Office of Rehabilitation has partnered with the Utah State Board of Education, the Workforce Development Division and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities to implement “School to Work” pilots in five school districts in Utah. The “School to Work” pilot teams utilize the Customized Employment process to assist students with disabilities with competitive, integrated employment prior to graduation from high school or post high school. Teams work collaboratively to serve students and braid funding so students can access services needed to become employed and independent.

The Utah Office of Rehabilitation continues to present webinars and at conferences, collaborating with partners from the Workforce Development Division, Division of Services for People with Disabilities, the Utah State Board of Education, and the Divisions of Substance Abuse and Mental Health in an effort to enhance and demonstrate partnerships and collaboration among agencies serving transition age youth across the state.

The Utah Department of Workforce Services partners with the Utah Department of Corrections to support the implementation of the Second Chance Grant. At the local level Vocational Rehabilitation, the Workforce Development Division as well as other partners participate in the discharge phase.

Partner staff meet weekly for the prison Release Day to provide information about services and resources available for offenders and their families.

The Utah Office of Homeless Services, housed in the Department of Workforce Services, supports thirteen Local Homelessness Councils (LHCs) across the state. The LHCs encompass a vast array of partners and stakeholders including state and local agencies and community organizations. A key partner in the LHC system structure is the local Department of Workforce Services Employment Counseling Staff. At the LHC level, work together to ensure funding is available, create pathways for accessing various services, training staff, implement a coordinated intake process, and create strategies to engage individuals and families experiencing homelessness and lack of employment and training opportunities. Utah recognizes that experiencing homelessness is a complicated and individual situation, therefore, LHCs are working toward a multifaceted approach that includes:

- Emergency shelter
- Medical care
- Mental health treatment
- Drug treatment
- Public safety
- Employment and training support
- Affordable housing

Utah has been analyzing, reporting data and working towards reducing the number of families experiencing intergenerational poverty since 2012. Efforts to improve the lives of families and children experiencing intergenerational poverty happen at both the state and county levels. The number of families experiencing intergenerational poverty has decreased, but a current report shows there is still more to do, particularly in Utah's robust economic climate that should provide opportunities for even families that need the most support. The Workforce Development Division will launch a project providing educational and career support to adults experiencing intergenerational poverty while also connecting their children to early learning and development services. This project is intended to help the whole family by using a two-generational approach.

The project will engage individuals living in intergenerational poverty receiving Workforce Development Division services to:

- Increase the number obtaining a high school diploma or GED
- Increase the number with post-secondary, marketable, employability skills
- Increase employment and wages
- Ensure the family has their basic needs met and that children are receiving the necessary supports and services for healthy development

Utah's Invest in You Too pathway is designed for single mothers interested in obtaining training in the medical device manufacturing field. The 12-week certificate program complements the classroom training provided by Salt Lake Community College with soft skills instruction by the Department of

Workforce Services in a cohort model. Additionally, on-site tours of the industry's employers occur for the participants. This partnership between the Department of Workforce Services, Salt Lake Community College, and medical manufacturing employers provides individuals with the skills needed to succeed in this in-demand industry.

The Department of Workforce Services provides access to Licensed Clinical Social Workers for all of the American Job Centers. Individuals who need these types of services set up appointments to meet with social workers.

The Utah Department of Workforce Services delivered three modules of career coach training to Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development Division staff. Supervisors and managers served as facilitators for small groups of employees sitting at tables. This type of training was successful because staff were able to share ideas, problem-solve together and receive consistent training and messaging. The Department of Workforce Services will continue to deliver training in this manner, when it is appropriate.

## **D. Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers**

Describe how the entities carrying out the respective core programs, any Combined State Plan partner program included in this plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality services to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry or sector partners in the state. The activities described shall conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

### **Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers**

Partners will coordinate activities and resources to provide comprehensive, high-quality, customer-centered services, including supportive services, to employers to meet their current and projected workforce needs. The activities will conform to the statutory requirements of each program.

The Operations Committee will coordinate with the other committees to develop recommendations for aligning the Workforce Development Division, the Utah Office of Rehabilitation, Adult Education, and other required partner services for employers.

The Operations Committee will receive reports on partners' current employer engagement processes. The Employer Engagement Workgroup will continue to receive reports from the Business Customer Survey, and make recommendations for improving employer engagement. They will identify gaps and explore new ways to better meet employers' workforce needs and to achieve the goals of industry partners, including:

- Ensuring all partners are aligned and coordinated in educating employers about individuals with barriers, with an emphasis on the targeted industries
- Ensuring core, required and optional one-stop partners collaborate
- Ensuring core, required, and optional one-stop partners are not duplicating services
- Ensuring that all partners are engaging with employers and high demand industries needs are being addressed within each of the economic regions

- Exploring ways all partners can leverage Office of Rehabilitation's business relations services and resources
- Identifying ways all partners can participate in promoting employer boards utilized by Career and Technical Education at the secondary (K-12, Utah State Board of Education) and post-secondary education levels (USHE, Utah System of High Education)
- Developing recommendations for a process to coordinate efforts to understand employer needs from a full workforce development system point of view, coordinating all partner efforts as well as new methods
- Developing a plan for coordinating and collaborating core partner, education partner, and economic development partner outreach to employers
- Reporting to the State Workforce Development Board on the status of recommendations, implementation of recommendations and review of performance measures

The Operations Committee will provide recommendations to the appropriate agencies, groups, and the State Workforce Development Board.

## E. Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's community colleges and area career and technical education schools, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system. WIOA section 102(b)(2)(B)(iv).

### **Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions.**

Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions: Utah's strategies will engage its community colleges and area career and technical education schools as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

Utah's strategies engage state education and training providers, including the Utah System of Higher Education and its eleven technical education institutions as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

The Department of Workforce Services serves as a resource to its Utah System of Higher Education partners. Department of Workforce Services employees serve on education advisory boards. Utah educational institutions rely on the Department of Workforce Services labor market information and employer outreach efforts to inform their decisions regarding curriculum and program adjustments.

Career centers exist at every Utah System of Higher Education institution. The institutional career centers offer job posting services, workforce development training, career advice, workplace readiness training and more. Many of these institutional programs supplement their services through collaboration with the Department of Workforce Services. Agency colleagues sit on center advisory boards, share updated résumé or job search practices and curriculum materials, serve as guest speakers and frequently partner at every institution on activities from career exploration days and high school leadership workshops to college and community job fairs and outreach events to veterans, minorities and other under-served populations. Utah will explore ways to build stronger connections

between core partner counselors and post-secondary career resource counselors, including Disability Resource Centers, to ensure customers have access to all services the partners offer.

The Office of Rehabilitation and Utah System of Higher Education will maintain a cooperative agreement to guide coordinated efforts to provide access to post-secondary education to people with disabilities. To achieve this end, the agreement includes direction for collaboration and coordination between the Office of Rehabilitation and each public institution of higher education. The Office of Rehabilitation district offices and each institution of higher education Disability Services Office will designate staff liaison assignments to serve as agency representatives, organize local coordination efforts, communicate problems and develop best practices. The Office of Rehabilitation and Disability Services Office liaisons will meet throughout the school year to organize cross-training and ensure the established referral pathways between programs are functional and utilized. Disability Services Office staff and Office of Rehabilitation counselors exchange information, according to applicable laws, to facilitate evaluating individual client needs, providing appropriate accommodations or auxiliary aids and engaging in educational goal planning.

#### Talent Ready Utah

The Talent Ready Utah program is designed to strengthen collaboration between industry and education, in order to better respond to the needs of regional and statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations. It is a collaborative partnership among:

- The Department of Workforce Services
- The Utah System of Higher Education
- The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity
- The Utah State Board of Education
- The Utah State Legislature

The Talent Ready Utah program provides funding to public post-secondary educational institutions to develop, implement or enhance educational programs that are responsive to regional and statewide industry needs or industry trade associations serving high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations or regional economic needs. Talent Ready Utah program also provides support to public school districts, individual schools or charter schools to develop, implement or enhance career pathway programs and connect them to post-secondary institutions. Some programs that operate from Talent Ready Utah program are the Career Pathways, Utah Works, and the Talent Ready Apprenticeship Connection.

The programs organized by Talent Ready Utah Program are intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum, and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce and employers.

## F. Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers

Describe how the State's Strategies will engage the State's other education and training providers, including providers on the state's eligible training provider list, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

#### **Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers**

The Utah State Board of Education continues to engage with and provide funding to other education and training providers through the competitive funding process. Local community-based organizations partner with school-based programs to consolidate efforts while providing coursework and workforce preparation activities to eligible participants.

The Office of Rehabilitation maintains partnerships with private training providers and supports private training programs. The Office of Rehabilitation has a system for approving private training programs in order to fulfill client informed choice for selection of training services and training program providers. Private training providers continue to be an invaluable source of niche subject education that helps Office of Rehabilitation clients reach their individual employment goals commensurate with their abilities, interests, strengths, and priorities.

Partners engage other education and training providers, including training providers on the state's Eligible Training Provider List, as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven education and training system.

- The Education and Training Provider List supports education and training providers as partners in the workforce development system by publicly disseminating the list of approved providers with information on quality, job-driven training programs. It supports informed consumer choice by providing provider costs and performance outcomes
- Comprehensive one-stop centers will coordinate strategies through their regular meetings with other local education and training partners

## **G. Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access**

Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

#### **Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access.**

Describe how the State's strategies will enable the State to leverage other Federal, State, and local investments that have enhanced access to workforce development programs at the above institutions, described in section (E).

#### Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

Utah's strategies provide the opportunity to leverage federal, state and local investments that enhance access to workforce development programs in the Utah System of Higher Education, including improving access for the rural areas of the state.

A new scholarship available to Utah System of Higher Education students, Access Utah Promise Scholarship, is need-based and makes the first two years of education available to an increased number of students. Additionally, a new Technical Education Scholarship provides funding for students in short-term (typically one-year or less) technical education certificate programs. A Talent Development Incentive Loan program is also available that provides support for students majoring in programs leading to qualified degrees.

Under the direction of the Utah Board of Higher Education, every high school in Utah will have a full-time, permanent college access advisor by the 2021-2022 school year, contingent on legislative funding. As the program is implemented across the state, it will be regionally integrated into local public colleges and universities to tie in with their existing programming and college access efforts. The college access advisors will:

- Help students register for and complete college entrance exams
- Assist students with submitting college applications, applying for scholarships, and financial aid
- Connect students to first-year experience programs to ensure a smooth transition from high school to college

The Office of Rehabilitation will partner with colleges and universities to ensure that students with disabilities have access to post-secondary training and credentials. The Office of Rehabilitation continues to coordinate with educational institutions to leverage federal and state grant funding for students with disabilities. When available federal and state grant funding is utilized as a comparable benefit to supplement the Office of Rehabilitation support for training and credential attainment.

The one-stop center partners, including Workforce Development Division staff, receive information about federal and state scholarships, grants and student loans. They know who their education partner contacts are to assist individuals with these resources.

## H. Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Describe how the State's strategies will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including Registered Apprenticeship certificates. This includes credentials that are industry-recognized certificates, licenses or certifications, and that are portable and stackable.

### **Improving Access to Post-secondary Credentials**

Aligning, coordinating and establishing collaboration among the core and required partners will increase customer access and referrals to programs, leading to completion of stackable and marketable credentials as well as post-secondary opportunities. Utah's secondary, post-secondary, Adult Education, Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, and other core and required partners are working together to ensure individuals have access to post-secondary education and training. The strategies outlined in this plan will enhance and support those efforts, such as coordinating data systems, working with members of the Education and Training Provider List, coordinating career pathways projects and continually improving integrated service delivery.



The Department of Workforce Services currently serves as a resource to its Utah System of Higher Education partners. Department of Workforce Services employees serve on advisory boards throughout the state. Utah educational institutions rely on the Department of Workforce Services' labor market information and employer outreach efforts to inform their decisions regarding curriculum and program adjustments.

Career centers exist at every Utah System of Higher Education institution campus. The institutional career centers offer job posting services, workforce development training, career advice, workplace readiness training, and more. Many of these institutional programs supplement their services through collaboration with the Department of Workforce Services. Agency colleagues may sit on center advisory boards, share updated résumé or job-search practices and curriculum materials, serve as guest speakers and frequently partner at every institution on activities from career-exploration days and high-school leadership workshops to college and community job fairs, and outreach events to veterans, minorities and other under-served populations.

Through the State Workforce Development Board committee work, Utah will continue to explore and identify ways to build stronger connections between core partner counselors and post-secondary career resource counselors/professions, including Disability Resource Centers, to ensure customers have access to all services the partners offer.

The Utah Office of Rehabilitation collaborates with post-secondary training programs to eliminate programmatic and accessibility barriers for individuals with disabilities. The Utah Office of Rehabilitation staff receives cross training and information from local higher education institutions about credential attainment requirements. The Utah Office of Rehabilitation provides counseling on post-secondary opportunities to individuals with disabilities, including youth and students with disabilities, to improve access to credential attainment. Utah Office of Rehabilitation district offices and each institution of higher education Disability Services Office will designate staff liaison assignments to serve as agency representatives, organize local efforts, communicate problems and develop best practices. These liaisons will meet throughout the school year to organize cross-training and ensure the established referral pathways between programs are functional and utilized. Disability Services Office staff and Utah Office of Rehabilitation counselors exchange information, according to applicable laws, to facilitate evaluating individual client needs, providing appropriate accommodations or auxiliary aids and engaging in educational goal planning.

The Apprenticeship Committee is working to improve access to registered apprenticeship programs and expand the types of apprenticeships available to job seekers and students. The committee's top priorities include expanding awareness and expanding the types of apprenticeships available to include industries such as manufacturing, medical, and information technology. In addition, the committee is coordinating with the Career Pathways Committee to ensure their recommendations align. This is an ongoing activity.

The Career Pathways Committee plans to connect with local one-stop center partners to identify best practices and gather information to explore opportunities for improving alignment, collaboration and gaps. This information will be used to support recommendations for developing career pathways that support Utah's targeted industries. This is an ongoing activity.

The Career Pathways Committee will include in its ongoing analysis, a description of the state's strategies that engage education and training providers, including training providers on the state's Eligible Training Provider List as partners in the workforce development system to create a job-driven

education and training system. This includes sharing and discussing Career and Technical Education state plans between state workforce and education agencies.

The Talent Ready Utah program is represented on the Career Pathways Committee. The Talent Ready Utah program is designed to strengthen collaboration between industry and education to better respond to the needs of regional and statewide high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations.

The Talent Ready Utah program is intended to increase the number of individuals who earn industry-recognized credentials, develop career pathways with multiple entry and exit points for students along the post-secondary education continuum and create systemic change by establishing processes and programs that better connect education, the workforce, and employers.

The Career Pathways Committee will explore opportunities to develop strategies to increase access to postsecondary credentials working with all of Utah's workforce development partners:

- Education
  - Utah System of Higher Education (includes post-secondary Career and Technical Education)
  - Adult Education
  - Utah State Board of Education
- Department of Workforce Services divisions
  - Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Unemployment Insurance
  - Workforce Development Division
  - Workforce Research and Analysis
- Department of Workforce Services programs and initiatives
  - Veterans and Military Initiatives
  - Employment First
  - Choose to Work
  - Work Success
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
  - Community Services Block Grant
- Other state agencies and divisions
  - The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity
  - Unified Economic Opportunity Commission

- Talent, Industry, Education Alignment Subcommittee
  - Talent Ready Utah Program
    - STEM Action Center
- Utah State Workforce Development Board
  - Representation from the SWDB Career Pathways Committee
- Required partners
  - Job Corps
  - National Farmworkers Jobs program (Futures Through Training)
  - Senior Community Service Employment Program
  - YouthBuild

## I. Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

Describe how the activities identified in (A) will be coordinated with economic development entities, strategies, and activities in the State.

### **Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies**

Activities defined in (A) will be coordinated with the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, Economic Development Corporation of Utah, Governor's Unified Economic Opportunity Commission , and local economic development organizations' activities and strategies. The Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity is an active member of many of the committees, workgroups and projects described throughout this plan. They serve on the State Workforce Development Board, which ensures their participation in coordinating activities between the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, core partners, and required partners. Department of Workforce Services staff also attend the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity board meetings to support the growth of local employers and identify connection points for partnerships.

## **b. State Operating Systems and Policies**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the State operating systems and policies that will support the implementation of the State strategy described in section II **Strategic Elements**. This includes—

Utah's Unified Plan includes an Operational Planning Elements section that supports Utah's strategy and system-wide vision described in Section II(c).

1. The State operating systems that will support the implementation of the State's strategies. This must include a description of—

A. State operating systems that support coordinated implementation of State strategies (e.g., labor market information systems, data systems, communication systems, case-management systems, job banks, etc.)

**State Operating Systems and Policies.**

Utah's operating systems that support coordinated implementation of state strategies include:

- Labor Market Information

The Workforce Research and Analysis Division gathers data regarding the economy. Its mission is to generate accurate, timely and understandable data and analyses to provide knowledge of ever-changing workforce environments that inform sound planning and decision-making. Staff collect information describing the Utah labor market, including wages; employment projections by industry, occupation and area; cost of living; employment and unemployment; labor force characteristics; career trends; and industry trends. The Department of Workforce Services, the State Workforce Development Board, core partners, and other partners utilize the workforce information collected in planning and decision-making to determine job growth areas, skill gaps, income and wage data, migration, demographics, cost of living and career-exploration opportunities. This information is critical in determining the targeted industries and occupations while working with partners in business and education to ensure needed skills training is available.

Additionally, information collected is used to assist individuals to help them make informed career choices. This information is available to customers through the Workforce Information page of the Department of Workforce Services website at [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov). The Department of Workforce Services works closely with individuals, employers, and workforce system partners to make the information meaningful and practical for end-users.

- Data Collection Systems:
  - UWORKS is an integrated case management system. It is a web-based system used by the Department of Workforce Services to support self-service individuals by providing access to information and services that help them obtain employment. It tracks mediated staff services, allowing employment counselors to easily manage cases and assist individuals in reaching their employment goals. This system captures funding source requirements, training-provider details and youth-provider information, allowing for program accountability and resource scheduling. The system supports both self-service and mediated job seekers and employers. Because of the different types of users supported, the system accommodates multiple system entry points, multiple levels of security and the ability to seamlessly transfer job seekers or employers from self-directed to staff-assisted.
  - The Electronic Resource and Eligibility Product (eRep) is the system used to determine supportive service program eligibility for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Food Stamps, Medicaid, etc.
  - eShare is Utah's data repository system that collects information from several systems and allows for one central location for service providers who are determining

intensive/training service eligibility through UWORKS to gather required customer information.

- eClient is an electronic imaging system used to hold and view documents for all customer types specific to eRep.
- myCase is an Internet-based system that allows customers to ascertain the status of their case.
- Interactive self-service and mediated-service systems called Contributions Automated Tax System (CATS) and Comprehensive Unemployment Benefits System (CUBS) are used to collect data and process all services offered by the Unemployment Insurance Division, including the collection of wage data and new hire information from employers.
- eReports is the data reporting system the Department of Workforce Services uses to provide detailed information about customer activities and outcomes, providing administrators, managers, front-line staff and program staff with supplemental tools to ensure performance outcome attainment. The eReports system has access to the following systems: CUBS, CATS, UWORKS, and eRep.
- The Department of Workforce Services' Data Warehouse contains data and could house additional data used to support the strategies of the State Plan.
- Adult education data are collected through a relational web based database called UTopia (Utah Online Performance Indicators for Adult Education). As students move throughout the state (currently 40 program sites with multiple sites), their data follows them in real time. All reporting elements defined by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) to meet the needs of WIOA reporting are built into the database and will be shared with and made accessible to core partners through secure portals. UTopia provides adult educators and the Utah State Board of Education Adult Education Services staff with effective and valid data to enhance program improvements, ensuring successful student outcomes.
- The Utah Office of Rehabilitation utilizes the Accessible Web-based Activity and Reporting Environment (AWARE) for data collection. AWARE is a fully integrated, comprehensive case-management system the Utah Office of Rehabilitation utilizes for documentation, caseload management, budget and expenditures, and outcome reporting. It collects client information covering the life cycle of a case: application, trial work experiences, eligibility, plan, job ready, employment and closure, and then to post-employment services and follow up. AWARE is continually updated to reflect the required WIOA requirements for the Rehabilitation Service Administration's Case Service 9-11 Report. All data collected in AWARE is readily available for automated reporting. In addition, AWARE currently interfaces with the UWORKS case management system to enhance collection and integration between core programs and activities.
- The Department of Workforce Services has developed a Partner Referral System for comprehensive one-stop partners. All partners have the ability to create information sheets about their programs that are accessible to operations staff. They can also

make, receive, and monitor referrals. Partners can create reports to evaluate processes and track referrals. Utah trained staff during 2021 and the system has been fully implemented. The Utah Data Research Center houses data from multiple state agencies to enable the longitudinal research of Utahns. It is the only entity that can match identities in cross-agency data of this magnitude. This allows researchers to analyze Utahns over time as they enroll and graduate from school and participate in the workforce.

## **B. Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers**

Data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers.<sup>10</sup>

[10] For the PY 2016 state plan, descriptions of data collection and reporting processes need only include currently known indicators.

Utah's data-collection and reporting processes used for all programs and activities, including those present in one-stop centers, are described in (A).

2. The State policies that will support the implementation of the State's strategies (e.g., co-enrollment policies and universal intake processes where appropriate). In addition, provide the State's guidelines for State-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system

Utah's policies support the implementation of its strategies. In addition, Utah has created one-stop criteria and an MOU/IFA that provide guidelines and requirements for one-stop partner contributions to Utah's one-stop delivery system. Utah's MOU/IFA was updated in November 2021. Partners met and reviewed the documents providing the opportunity to discuss changes and updates. The MOU/IFA was updated again in October 2021 to include new co-location agreements between the Department of Workforce Services and the Utah State Board of Education, Adult Education. The Operations Committee of the State Workforce Development Board, which includes representation from all core and required partners oversees the development of one-stop criteria, so all partners have the opportunity to participate in the process. All core and required partners were invited to participate in the development of the new Partner Referral System that will be used in all one-stop centers. Procedures for the Partner Referral System have been developed.

### **3. State Program and State Board Overview**

#### **A. State Agency Organization**

Describe the organization and delivery systems at the State and local levels for the programs covered in the plan, including the organizational structure. Include an organizational chart.

#### **State Program and State Board Overview**

##### State Agency Organization

Utah's Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs are housed with the Department of Workforce Services and delivered through the state's one-stop centers. The Utah Board of Education provides administrative authority over adult education.

## B. State Board

Provide a description of the State Board, including—

### **State Board**

#### Utah State Workforce Development Board

##### Introduction

On July 22, 2014, H.R. 803 the "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act" was signed into law. This replaced the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amended the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This also created the State Workforce Development Board.

The Utah State Workforce Development Board's principal assets are its informed and dedicated members. Partner organizations are grateful for the business, community and government leaders who volunteer their time, knowledge and expertise to Utah's workforce development efforts.

##### Governor's Vision and Board Mission

The State Workforce Development Board's vision anticipates a dynamic state with a richly diversified economy that is attractive both to employers who create and sustain jobs, as well as individuals who bring knowledge and skills to those jobs. The board supports its vision, mission and commitment to taxpayers through its partnership of state and local government, business, economic development, and community organizations. Based on direct partner input and data, the board guides the strategic alignment of programs, resources, and services with employer needs creating a strong workforce development system for Utah.

##### State Workforce Development Board Mission

To strengthen Utah's workforce development system to meet employer needs through innovative strategies that keep pace with economic change.

##### Commitment to Taxpayers

To provide quality, accountable and streamlined services that connect a world class workforce with employment.

##### Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the Board in lending support to the vision, mission and commitment to taxpayers:

- The State Workforce Development Board understands the key current and future workforce needs of business and industry.

- Workforce partnerships are formed between business, local government, education, community partners and economic development organizations to address and identify key needs.
- The Board serves as a convener of diverse stakeholders who will actively participate and collaborate with all partners, both public and private. Solid partnerships are keys to success.
- The Board will adopt a common set of key workforce development data elements, goals, measures and a continuous improvement process among the six core programs.
- Training resources focus on programs that prepare and connect unemployed workers with high quality training to get good jobs, stay employed and meet the needs of employers.
- The Board, led by business, focuses a significant portion of its workload on labor market demand trends and issues, which shape the jobs of today and influence the opportunities of tomorrow.

#### Statutory Responsibilities

The State Workforce Development Board oversees strategic direction for the six core partners of WIOA. Board members are appointed by the Governor and have the following statutory functions:

- Provide leadership in the development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, job seekers, through industry and sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the Unified State plan
- Assist in the development of strategies to support the use of career pathways to include low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities
- Review the statewide policies and programs and make recommendations on actions that should take place to align workforce development programs in the state with the six core programs
- Coordinate the planning and delivery of workforce development services with the six core programs and other mandatory partners
- Assist in the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system and one-stop delivery system in the state
- Designate one-stop operator (the Department of Workforce Services is currently Utah's designated one-stop operator)
- Assist in the development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures to assess the effectiveness of core programs in the state. This includes approving criteria and eligibility of training providers, as well as publishing performance outcomes on training providers
- Develop annual report



- Assist in the development of strategies for technological improvements to improve the quality of services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system
- Improve the understanding and visibility of state workforce service efforts through external and internal marketing strategies
- Perform other responsibilities within the scope of workforce services as requested by the Legislature, the Governor or Governor's designee

#### Member Responsibilities

The State Workforce Development Board members shall act in the best interests of the State and the following is expected of each member:

- Attendance and Punctuality

Attend quarterly State Workforce Development Board meetings and designated committee meetings. The State Workforce Development Board and committee chairs shall start and conclude each meeting in a timely fashion. A minimum of five hours each quarter is the expected quarterly commitment of each member.

- Meeting Schedule

The meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each quarter. Committee meetings are typically held on the day of the board meeting, usually between 10:00 a.m. and noon, and the board meets from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated. The location of meetings is announced and meeting materials are sent to members in advance and posted on the website.

- Participation

Beyond attendance and punctuality, each member should prepare for the meetings by reviewing pre-meeting materials and contacting resources for further information and opinions, as necessary. To ensure collective effectiveness, each member should provide his/her knowledge and expertise on substantive State Workforce Development Board issues. A candid expression of ideas and opinions among colleagues as well as respect for differences and similarities will ensure success.

- Committees Participation

Each member of the State Workforce Development Board should actively participate on his/her designated standing committee.

#### Access to Resources

Beyond preparing for and participating in State Workforce Development Board activities, each member should be prepared to tap into other available resources in order to carry out the State Workforce Development Board mission, including professional networks, technical support, etc.

#### Compensation, Per Diem, and Expenses

State Workforce Development Board members who are not public members, state or local government members, or higher education members, may receive compensation, per diem and expenses at the rates established by the Division of Finance.

## Conflict of Interest

The State Workforce Development Board exists for purposes that transcend personal, professional and corporate self-interests. Consequently, any board member who may have a conflict of interest must announce such potential conflict prior to voting on an affected issue.

## i. Membership Roster

Provide a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

## ii. Board Activities

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

### **Board Activities**

Provide a description of the activities that will assist State Board members and staff in carrying out State Board functions effectively.

#### Board Activities

The Department of Workforce Services had statute authority to serve as the administrative entity for the State Council of Workforce Services. During the 2017 Utah State Legislative session, the state code was amended to align with the changes in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) found in 29 U.S.C. Section 3101 et al. The Department of Workforce Services will retain the administrative oversight of the State Workforce Development Board.

The governor, in accordance with Section 106(d) of WIOA, retains and designates Utah as a "Single State Local Area." Utah is well situated and prepared to continue delivering integrated workforce services and will align its governance and administrative structure to set policy direction and establish realistic performance goals. The State Workforce Development Board serves as the advisory body to provide guidance, oversight and evaluation to ensure programs remain fully responsive to Utah's economic development and labor market needs. State agencies with core and required programs will continue, in a coordinated approach, to implement specific workforce development programs through the certified one-stop centers in local areas.

In terms of section 101(d) of WIOA, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) will assist the Governor in the development, implementation and modification of the state plan through committees overseen by the board and chaired by members that fulfill assignments related to these activities. The board reviews and approves Utah's Unified State plan, including all modifications during committee meetings, full board meetings, and email communications.

The State Workforce Development Board, <https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/statecouncil/index.html>, leads the development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in Utah including, through its Board led and core/required partner staffed committees:

- Identifying barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system
- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth and individuals with barriers to

employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services including: access to transportation, referrals to physical and mental health assistance, housing assistance, child and dependent care, and income support to enter or retain employment

- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and job seekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- The development and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system, including providing assistance to one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with planning and delivering services, including training services and supportive services to support effective delivery of services to workers, jobseekers, and employers
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system
- The development and updating of comprehensive state adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the core programs in the state as required under section 116(b)
- The identification and dissemination of information on best practices, including best practices for:
  - The effective operation of one-stop centers relating to the use of business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies, including strategies for serving individuals with barriers to employment
  - Effective training programs that respond to real-time labor market analysis, and effectively use direct assessment and prior learning assessment to measure an individual's prior knowledge, skills, competencies, and experiences, and that evaluate such skills, and competencies for adaptability, to support efficient placement into employment or career pathways
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the State's one-stop delivery system described in section 121(e), including the development of
  - Policies relating to the appropriate roles and contributions of entities carrying out one-stop partner programs within the one-stop delivery system, including approaches to facilitating equitable and efficient cost allocation in the system
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to and improve the quality of services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system including such improvements to:
  - Enhance digital literacy skills as defined in section 202 of the Museum and Library Services Act (20U.S.C. 9101); referred to in this Act as "digital literacy skills")

- Accelerate the acquisition of skills and recognized postsecondary credentials by participants
- Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals
- Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas
- The development of strategies for aligning technology and data systems across one-stop partner programs to enhance service delivery and improve efficiencies in reporting on performance accountability measurement and reporting processes to improve coordination of services across one-stop partner programs
- The preparation of annual reports described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 116(d)
- The development of statewide workforce and labor market information system described in section 15€ of the Wagner-Peyser Act
- The development of such other policies as may promote statewide objectives for and enhance the performance of the workforce development system in the state

The State Workforce Development Board will oversee its committees to ensure that recommendations include implementation and evaluation plans that clearly articulate specific actions, milestones and ongoing assessment.

The State Workforce Development Board has support of agency staff. Agency staff from the core and required partners are available to provide support to the committees. This includes:

- Assisting with committee meetings
- Providing information
- Leading workgroups (in the temporary absence of the chair or co-chair)
- Ensuring appropriate membership on workgroups
- Recommending goals for the committee
- Reporting agency updates to the committee

The State Workforce Development Board members have a clear understanding of participation requirements:

Beyond attendance and punctuality, each member should prepare for meetings by reviewing pre-meeting materials and contacting resources for further information and opinions, as necessary. To ensure collective effectiveness, each member should provide his/her knowledge and expertise on substantive State Workforce Development Board issues. A candid expression of ideas and opinions among colleagues as well as respect for differences and similarities will ensure success.

Each member of the board should actively participate on his/her designated standing committee.

The State Workforce Development Board members have access to resources:

- Beyond preparing for and participating in board activities, each member should be prepared to tap into other available resources in order to carry out the board mission, including professional networks, technical support, etc.
- The State Workforce Development Board may receive compensation, per diem, and expenses to support their activities:
  - State Workforce Development Board members who are not public members, state or local government members, or higher education members, may receive compensation, per diem and expenses at the established State of Utah rates (e.g. only the pre-approved State rate amounts will be reimbursed for hotels and meals) established by the Division of Finance

## **4. Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners**

### **A. Assessment of Core Programs**

Describe how the core programs will be assessed each year based on State performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. This State assessment must include the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs broken down by local area or provider. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

#### **Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners**

##### Assessment of Core Programs

Utah core programs will be assessed annually based on the state performance accountability measures described in Section 116(b) of WIOA. Assessments include the quality, effectiveness and improvement of programs. Under the leadership of the Operations Committee, a workgroup with representation from the core partners will meet to define the performance accountability measures and sources of data, and how the information will be used for improvements. Utah will utilize previous performance measures as base measurements. The committee's recommendations will require approval from the State Workforce Development Board.

The Operations Committee will oversee the Data and Reports workgroup to develop a dashboard report of all core partner performance measures to be shared with community stakeholders including the State Workforce Development Board, State Rehabilitation Council, and Utah State Board of Education. The dashboard will be updated with performance data quarterly as it becomes available for federal reporting. The Operations Committee and the Data and Reports workgroup will meet as needed to review and refine the dashboard reporting procedure.

A determination of each of the core partners' successes will be measured by their ability to meet or exceed their agency's targets as set with Labor, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education and Rehabilitation. Annually the core partners will be expected to self-evaluate their outcomes at a state and economic service area level and take measurable action(s) to improve data/service outcomes. For example, Adult Education will provide technical assistance through the evaluation of program effectiveness through monthly desk audits of program data with each of the service providers. Each program is reviewed tri-annually at a minimum, or as needed as determined through a risk

assessment process. Adult Education's annual state professional development plan is based on program statuses, outcomes and issues. Annually each of the core partners will work with the Operations Committee to create a report for the State Workforce Development Board on successes and a plan defining program improvement.

Utah's performance accountability measures for the core programs shall consist of the primary indicators of performance for activities provided under the adult and dislocated worker programs authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B, the program of adult education and literacy activities authorized under title II, the H. R. 803—48 employment services program authorized under sections 1 through 13 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) (except that subclauses (IV) and (V) shall not apply to such program), and the program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741), shall consist of:

- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause (iii)), during participation in or within one year after exit from the program
- The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment
- The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv)
- The primary indicators of performance for the youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B shall consist of:
  - The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program
  - The percentage of program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
  - The primary indicators of performance described in subclauses (III) through (VI) of subparagraph (A)(i)

Utah has established levels of performance for each of the corresponding primary indicators of performance described in paragraph (2) for each of the programs described in clause (ii). Performance outcomes will be discussed with the Operations Committee to ascertain improvement strategies. Performance indicators will be negotiated with each federal government agency. The final agreed upon targets will be a result of performance data, regional data, and federal agencies

recommendations. Core programs will define processes that will be used to increase/improve future state outcomes.

The programs included under clause (i) are:

- The youth program authorized under chapter 2 of subtitle B
- The adult program authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B
- The dislocated worker program authorized under chapter 3 of subtitle B
- The program of adult education and literacy activities authorized under title II
- The employment services program authorized under sections 1 through 13 of the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.)
- The program authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741)

Utah has identified expected levels of performance for each of the required primary indicators of performance for each of the programs described in clause (ii) for the first two program years covered by its plan.

Utah will reach agreement with its federal liaisons for each indicator described in clause (iii) for each of the programs described in clause (ii) for each of the first two program years covered by its plan. In reaching the agreement, Utah and its federal agency liaisons shall take into H. R. 803—50 account the levels identified in its plan under clause (iii) and the factors described in clause (v). The levels agreed to shall be considered to be Utah's negotiated levels of performance for its program years and shall be incorporated into Utah's plan prior to the approval of the plan.

All Utah core partners and their federal liaisons shall reach agreement, prior to the third program year covered by Utah's plan, on levels of performance for each indicator. The levels agreed to shall be considered to be Utah's negotiated levels of performance for Utah's program and shall be incorporated into the plan as a modification to the plan.

Using funds authorized under a core program and made available to carry out this section, Utah will conduct ongoing evaluations of activities carried out in the state under each of the core programs. Utah will conduct the evaluations in order to promote, establish, implement, and utilize methods for continuously improving core program activities in order to achieve high-level performance within, and high-level outcomes from the workforce development system.

The evaluations conducted shall be designed in conjunction with the State Workforce Development Board and state agencies responsible for the administration of the core programs and shall include analysis of customer feedback and outcomes and process measures in the statewide workforce development system. The evaluations shall use analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups.

Utah core partners will prepare, submit to the State Workforce Development Board and make available to the public (including by electronic means), reports containing the results of evaluations conducted under this subsection, to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system.

## B. Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs

Describe how other one-stop delivery system partner program services and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the plan will be assessed each year. Such state assessments should take into account local and regional planning goals.

### **Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs**

Assessment of One-Stop Partner Programs. Utah's one-stop delivery system partner program services included in the plan will be assessed each year.

- Adult Education conducts monthly desk monitoring, tri-annual evaluations, and on-site monitoring. Programs prepare and submit annual program plans used by state staff as a tool to evaluate program needs and levels of improvements.
- The Department of Workforce Services has an internal Program Review Team that randomly audits operation's work. Operation Program Support provides edits and targeted support and training. The Workforce Development Division has defined monthly outcomes goals and conducts an annual risk assessment. Additionally, the Department of Workforce Services undergoes an ongoing single state audit.
- The Unemployment Insurance Division has defined monthly outcome goals with quality checks, and its Program Services team provides targeted support and training. Assessment will occur through the State Quality Service Plan process with the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.
- Vocational Rehabilitation conducts a tri-annual needs assessment, prepares annual district and quality assurance plans, conducts random and targeted client record reviews, and has an internal compliance officer.
- The State Workforce Development Board assesses continual improvement and ensures one-stop centers are meeting required criteria during the one-stop certification process. Criteria are attached.

## C. Previous Assessment Results

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.

### **Previous Assessment Results**

Beginning with the state plan modification in 2018 and for subsequent state plans and state plan modifications, provide the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs and other one-stop partner programs and Combined State Plan partner programs included in the Unified or Combined State plan during the preceding 2-year period (i.e. the 2-year period of the plan modification cycle). Describe how the State is adapting its strategies based on these assessments.



Below are the results of assessments of the effectiveness of the core programs during the preceding two-year period for the core partners. Utah plans to utilize its workgroups and State Workforce Development Board committees to adapt its strategies based on assessment results. These activities will be particularly meaningful as comprehensive one-stop centers are certified throughout the state.

Utah State Board of Education, Adult Education Previous Assessment Results

Primary Indicators of Performance	2020	2019
Employment Second Quarter after exit	23.87%	27.71%
Employment Fourth Quarter after exit	22.93%	13.56%
Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit	\$4,935	\$4,652
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit	10.09%	N/A
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit	7.96%	5.41%
Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit	1.13%	N/A
Attained any credential (unduplicated)	8.28%	5.39%

\*Note that adult education programs were significantly impacted by COVID during both of these years.

Department of Workforce Services, Office of Rehabilitation Previous Assessment Results

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's Vocational Rehabilitation Program remained in a baseline period for all performance measures outlined in WIOA section 116 and negotiated Measurable Skill Gain Targets for PY20 and PY21. However, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation reviews current performance on a quarterly basis, analyzing performance on common performance measures, in addition to other relevant data points such as employment outcomes, wages at closure, timeliness of eligible and plan development and the rehabilitation rate. Performance reports are run on a statewide, regional, and district basis to provide a comprehensive picture of performance throughout the state. To help inform the overall quality of the services being delivered, customer satisfaction surveys are available and results are reviewed quarterly to guide work moving forward. Finally, a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment is conducted every three years, which includes a survey of staff members, clients, and stakeholders to provide ongoing information and data points about service delivery.

	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020
Measurable Skills Gains	Negotiated Baseline	Negotiated 41.8%
	Actual 42.9%	Actual 51.6%
Credential Attainment	Negotiated Baseline	Negotiated Baseline

	Actual 3.3%	Actual 29.9%
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Negotiated Baseline	Negotiated Baseline
	Actual 55.4%	Actual 50.9%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Negotiated Baseline	Negotiated Baseline
	Actual 51.9%	Actual 48.6%
Median Wages	Baseline	Baseline
	Actual 3,713	Actual 3,989

#### Department of Workforce Services, Workforce Development Division Previous Assessment Results

Performance outcomes include the number of customers who complete an education program or who close as positive out of the total number of customers closed for that program year. Internal case reviews include the total case accuracy for cases reviewed in that program year.

Performance Measure	Program Year 2019	Program Year 2020
Training Completion Outcomes: The percentage of customers who complete a training program for the indicated program year.	60.4%	60.8%
Positive Enrollment Closures: The percentage of customers who close as employed or, for youth, entered post-secondary education, obtained employment, or increased in literacy/numeracy skills for the indicated program year.	85.1%	81.1% <del>4%</del>
Case Review Accuracy: This is based on the accuracy of the total case when reviewed during the indicated program year.	79.64%	75.2%

As the State Workforce Development Board and core partners move forward to accomplish the goals outlined in Utah's Unified Plan, they will address the performance of required partners. All core partners are developing goals and priorities within the plan that meet objectives of common performance measures.

In addition, supporting the strategies outlined in this plan, Utah's core partners will develop processes to continually provide technical assistance to operations, evaluate funding, identify areas of weakness and provide corrective intervention as needed. This is an ongoing activity and will include enhancing the system, guiding policy, establishing a system for continual improvement of activities, and exploring how to manage performance assessments with required partners.

Utah will use performance data as targets. The core partners will analyze the performance data, review the one-stop system annually, meet the State Workforce Development Board certification requirements, conduct customer satisfaction surveys, review accessibility and ensure continuous improvement efforts. The Operations Committee will oversee the presentation of analysis to the State Workforce Development Board as it becomes available. This is an ongoing activity.

As Utah implements new methods to evaluate customer satisfaction, existing customer feedback mechanisms will be used, and continuous improvement will take into consideration the indicators of performance. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities will be evaluated, and restraints will be addressed as they arise.

## **D. Evaluation**

Describe how the State will conduct evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs; how such projects will be coordinated with, and designed in conjunction with, State and local boards and with State agencies responsible for the administration of all respective core programs; and, further, how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education under WIOA.

### **Evaluation**

The Operations Committee will engage a workgroup in making recommendations regarding evaluations and research projects on activities under WIOA core programs. The recommendations will include how the projects will be researched, coordinated and/or designed in conjunction with the State Workforce Development Board and core partners. The recommendations may also describe how the projects will be coordinated with the evaluations provided for by federal liaisons under WIOA. As required and determined by the core partners, data will be made available for effectiveness analyses as defined by both Labor, Rehabilitation, and Education guidance for program improvement and compliance purposes.

The Operations Committee will convene a workgroup and prepare recommendations for the State Workforce Development Board in January 2022. The workgroup will establish defined outcomes with appropriate time frames, identify measurement methods, utilize data from LMI, MIS and other data resources, including studies provided by federal partners. Topics relevant to Utah will be defined by core partners in partnership with the Operations work group.

Examples of topics may include whether Utah strategies are successfully meeting the needs of key demographics, the effectiveness of implemented policies and procedures, and the impact of service delivery methods.

The State Workforce Development Board committees will assess and report on the effectiveness of goals in the plan and our ability to successfully meet negotiated performance levels each year. The

State Workforce Development Board will provide direction as needed to ensure that Utah's plan is implemented and meeting the needs of the state.

During PY 17, a workgroup reporting to the Operations Committee, which includes members from all of the core and required partners, made recommendations regarding Utah's research project to evaluate the effectiveness of Utah's WIOA training programs. Their recommendations were approved by the State Workforce Development Board. The workgroup assisted in preparing defined outcomes and identifying measurement methods during the Fall of 2018 and research began in January of 2019. Research staff from the University of Utah Social Research Institute continue to interview WIOA customers, analyze data and gather feedback from employment counselors. The final report will be available in PY 19 and it will be shared with the State Workforce Development Board and all partners to ensure it is used for potential program and service improvements.

Workforce Services is participating in a national study sponsored by the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation within the Administration of Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate Utah's Work Success program. The evaluation will examine the effectiveness of innovative employment programs in helping people find and keep jobs and obtain economic security. The evaluation will also document the design and implementation of the programs to replicate and enhance the most effective components. Mathematica Policy Research is conducting the study.

The Work Success Study involves a comprehensive study of the design and implementation of the Work Success program for people who are eligible to participate in Work Success randomly assigned to either a "Program Group" (Work Success program) or "Non-Program Group" (individualized career services). Effectiveness of the program will be determined by differences in outcomes between members of the program and non-program groups measured by:

- Weekly data tracking
- Interviews with Work Success coaches and program staff
- Survey of coaches and other staff
- Video recordings of Work Success coaching sessions
- In-depth interviews and surveys with study customers
- "Goal 4 It!" (a science-informed approach to achieving economic independence system) materials, presentation and professional development provided by Mathematica to Work Success

Workforce Services will receive \$130,000 from Mathematica, paid in increments, upon completion of benchmark outcomes. A portion of this funding is earmarked for marketing the Work Success Program. The study started on April 4, 2019 with a final enrollment goal of 1,000 customers. It is targeted to end on March 31, 2020 or when 1,000 customers are enrolled. Outcomes examined from the study include measures of success in:

- Obtaining and retaining employment

- Career advancement
- Earnings
- Receipt of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and other measures of self-sufficiency
- Other indicators personal and family well-being
- Improvement of self-regulation

Findings on Work Success will be provided in a series of reports from Mathematica beginning in Spring 2020 and produced on a rolling basis through 2023.

## 5. Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

Describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

### A. For Title I Programs

Provide a description of the written policies that establish the State's methods and factors used to distribute funds to local areas for—

#### i. Youth Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 128(b)(2) or (b)(3)

Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required.

#### ii. Adult and Training Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) or (b)(3)

Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required.

#### iii. Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities in Accordance with WIOA Section 133(b)(2) and Based on Data and Weights Assigned

Utah is a Single State Local Area, and, as such, a local distribution is not required.

### B. For Title II

#### i. Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness

Utah's eligible agency, the Utah State Board of Education, in the Spring of 2023,, will host a competition to award competitive multiyear (defined as a minimum of two years) grants for the provision of Adult Education services. Available funds (82.5 percent, of which a minimum of 10 percent will be allowed for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals) will be awarded to programs meeting Utah State Board of Education - Adult Education defined competition standards for the purpose of developing, implementing and improving adult education within Utah. Awards will be made based on application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. Programs will be required to show demonstrated effectiveness to be considered eligible for funding. To show demonstrated effectiveness, applicants will be required to submit data demonstrating successful level

gain percentages within the top three quartiles of the state in reading/writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition (where applicable). Applicants will also have to submit data showing effectiveness in transitioning students to employment, attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalence, and transition to postsecondary education and training. Eligible programs will then submit applications containing information regarding the thirteen considerations required in Section 231(e) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Completed applications will be reviewed and scored by multiple readers, including portions of the application that will be read by members of the State Workforce Development Board.

Utah State Board of Education - Adult Education state staff will then review the application scores and determine awards. Applicants not funded will have the opportunity to appeal the Utah State Board of Education's decision through an appeal hearing. Following the hearing, if desired, an applicant has the right to appeal to the Secretary of Education (defined in 34 CFR 76-401) for a final decision.

ii. Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers

Utah will ensure it continues to provide direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds through a consistent public announcement for potential funding opportunities. The Utah State Board of Education provided direct and equitable access to all eligible providers utilizing the following process (this activity was completed in Spring 2021 based on guidance released by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education):

- Issue a Notice of Availability: Notification of competition will be released through the posting of legal notices in Utah newspapers. An email blast will be released at the same time to all known potential providers. In addition, notification of a competition will be posted on the Utah State Board of Education Adult Education website.
- Process: A Technical Assistance Webinar will be held as announced in the legal notice. Completed Demonstrated Effectiveness applications will be submitted to the Utah State Board of Education on the assigned date and time. State staff score applications according to published scoring rubrics to determine eligible providers. Full grant applications will be sent out to all programs determined eligible through the Demonstrated Effectiveness application. Completed full-grant applications will be submitted to the Utah State Board of Education on the assigned date and time. State staff will conduct a cursory review by looking for compliance/completeness of defined basics that all applicants must complete. Any applicant whose application is found incomplete will be notified that they are ineligible to be considered for competition.
- Evaluation of Applications: Members of the State Workforce Development Board will read and score portions of the application. The Utah State Board of Education will assemble a panel of readers from the community to read the applications. A readers' resource packet will be utilized to assess and score the applications based on a defined scoring rubric. Readers will be trained on the processes on a predetermined date. All applications will be read and scored a minimum of three times by independent readers. Scored applications will be ranked and weighted for funding by a predetermined date. A preliminary announcement of a pending

award will be made after the competition, with the final award being announced and funded based on receipt of the state's award letter from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education.

Programs receiving awards must incorporate professional development opportunities into their grants. Personnel employed from Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds are required to participate in adult education-focused professional development training pertinent to advancing adult education. Other criteria may also be extended in an effort to increase state outcomes.

## **C. Vocational Rehabilitation Program**

In the case of a State that, under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act designates a State agency to administer the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under which VR services are provided for individuals who are blind, describe the process and the factors used by the State to determine the distribution of funds among the two VR agencies in the State.

Utah has one designated state unit for Vocational Rehabilitation services that encompasses all populations and activities. The Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program administered through the Utah Office of Rehabilitation is a combined Vocational Rehabilitation program that serves individuals who are blind as well as individuals of all disability types. The Utah Office of Rehabilitation, Vocational Rehabilitation program includes services for individuals who are blind and is implemented statewide. Utah Office of Rehabilitation distributes Vocational Rehabilitation program funds to ten district offices under the Division of Rehabilitation Services at the beginning of each budget year. The Utah Office of Rehabilitation uses a formula allocation as the methodology to initially distribute Vocational Rehabilitation program funds throughout the state to regional districts. The criteria for the Utah Office of Rehabilitation's formula allocation is based on regional service needs and program performance accountability.

## **6. Program Data**

### **A. Data Alignment and Integration**

Describe the plans of the lead State agencies with responsibility for the administration of the core programs, along with the State Board, to align and integrate available workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs, and education through postsecondary education, and to the extent possible, the Combined State Plan partner programs included in this plan. The description of the State's plan for integrating data systems should include the State's goals for achieving integration and any progress to date.

i. Describe the State's plans to make the management information systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation

#### **Data Alignment and Integration**

Using a common identifier, Utah is committed to working toward aligning and integrating its workforce and education data systems for the core programs, unemployment insurance programs and education through post-secondary education. Utah's plans to continue making the management information

systems for the core programs interoperable to maximize the efficient exchange of common data elements to support assessment and evaluation.

ii. Describe the State's plans to integrate data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in this plan

Utah's core partners currently share information about common customers who are served by Department of Workforce Services programs and services through interfaces. The core partners continue to explore options for creating a common registration that feeds into a relational database. The data could then be utilized for co-enrolling, providing additional resources, reporting, and enhancing the customer's service delivery experience. A workgroup is working toward integrating data systems to facilitate streamlined intake and service delivery to track participation across all programs included in its plan.

iii. Explain how the State board will assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs (including design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc.) and how such alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals

Utah will continue researching how the State Workforce Development Board can assist the governor in aligning technology and data systems across required one-stop partner programs, including unemployment insurance. This includes considerations related to the design and implementation of common intake, data collection, etc. and describing how alignment will improve service delivery to individuals, including unemployed individuals and employers. The Data and Reports workgroup will continue to report information to and receive feedback from the Operations Committee regarding these efforts.

iv. Describe the State's plans to develop and produce the reports required under section 116, performance accountability system. (WIOA section 116(d)(2))

Utah plans to develop and produce the reports required under Section 116, performance accountability system [WIOA Section 116(d)(2)]. Utah's core partners, the State Workforce Development Board, and chief elected officials will establish and operate fiscal and management accountability information systems based on guidelines established by the secretaries of labor and education. Utah currently meets fiscal and management accountability requirements. Utah will continue to monitor and make adjustments, as needed, to meet requirements.

## **B. Assessment of Participants' Post-program Success**

Describe how lead State agencies will use the workforce development system to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment. States may choose to set additional indicators of performance.

### **Assessment of Participants' Post-program success**

The State Workforce Development Board oversees the assessment of Utah's ability to meet the goals set in the negotiated performance measures. The Operations Committee will evaluate the progress of



participants who are exiting from core programs in entering, persisting in, and completing post-secondary education, or who are entering or remaining in employment. The core partners will share data to help identify and remediate gaps to enhance customer experience. The Operations Committee's Data and Reports Workgroup maintains the report incorporating data from partners working with participants exiting programs and training/education programs.

## **C. Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data**

Explain how the State will meet the requirements to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability, evaluations, and as a source for workforce and labor market information, consistent with Federal and State law. (This Operational Planning element applies to core programs.)

### **Use of Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data**

Utah currently uses Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data to evaluate performance accountability for Adult, Dislocated Workers, Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs. Unemployment Insurance wage records are currently used and shared with appropriate partners (covered by MOUs) as a source for workforce and labor market information consistent with federal and state law. Utah's plan to align, share and integrate data is addressed under Program Data (6)(A) above.

## **D. Privacy Safeguards**

Describe the privacy safeguards incorporated in the State's workforce development system, including safeguards required by section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and other applicable Federal laws.

### **Privacy Safeguards**

Utah incorporates privacy safeguards into its workforce development system. Currently Utah conducts required annual staff training and utilizes required release/waiver forms. Utah must strictly adhere to the state's interpretation of FERPA and follow established security processes and policies required by the Department of Technology Services for all of its systems and databases.

The following safeguards are in place for the workforce development system:

- Data is contained in a secure database maintained by the Utah Department of Workforce Services following Utah Department of Technology Services information technology standards. Data is backed up on secure servers nightly and firewalls are evaluated on an ongoing basis by a security team. All data access is password protected. Individuals accessing the database are required to update their password at least every 90 calendar days.
- Access to computer programs is only available to staff on a need to know basis, based upon the employee's role with a division. Staff no longer associated with a particular role or division are denied access. Supervisors are required to review employee's access every 90 days.
- Through contact with their counselor or Department of Workforce Services staff, customers have access to their records contained in the database

- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer line and only as allowed by Federal and State law

The following safeguards are in place for adult education students:

- Data is contained in a secure database maintained by the Utah State Board of Education following Utah Department of Technology Services information technology standards. Student identifiable data is scrubbed from the development and training databases; data is backed up on secure servers nightly and firewalls are evaluated on an ongoing basis by a security team. All data access is password protected. Individuals accessing the database are required to update their password every 90 calendar days.
- Access by programs is only available to staff on a need to know basis meaning that not all service providers have access to the database. Staff no longer associated with a program are denied access upon termination from a program.
- Through contact with their adult education counselor, students have access to their records contained in the database. Students must sign a release of record to release any of their records to the Department of Workforce Services, the Office of Rehabilitation, other agencies, or individuals. On an as-needed basis, students may ask appropriate staff to run reports specific to their education (e.g. class schedule, Student Education Occupation play, grade transcripts and testing reports).
- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer line and only with records whereby students have given permission. Data returned for reporting purposes is only an aggregate count and not personally identifiable.

The following safeguards are in place for general education students: parents have access to their student's education records and the right to protect the student's rights to privacy by limiting the availability of student records without parental consent. Utah follows FERPA guidelines in ensuring that rights including:

- The ability to inspect and review education records relating to the student maintained by the school the student attends or has attended,
- The right to challenge and require the school to amend an education record concerning the student that is inaccurate or misleading or in violation of the student's privacy rights, and
- The right to require the school to obtain written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information, subject to specific exceptions.
- Notifying parents, and students eighteen years of age or older, of the above rights.

The Office of Rehabilitation follows privacy safeguards in accordance with state and federal laws and professional ethics which require the protection of personally identifiable information specific to Vocational Rehabilitation:

- The Office of Rehabilitation maintains policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of all personal information including photographs and list of client names.
- Personally identifiable information obtained by the Office of Rehabilitation, its employees or agents concerning individuals applying for or receiving services are not disclosed without the

prior written consent of the individual or the individual's legal representative, except as required for administration of programs or services.

- All client information related to the vocational rehabilitation program is maintained by the Office of Rehabilitation in the secure AWARE case management system, in accordance with the standards established by the Utah Department of Technology Services.
- Access to the AWARE case management system is password protected. Access to the system requires pre-approval and a signed agreement completed with terms and conditions defined in the AWARE Access Form. Access to information in the AWARE system is based upon employee's roles within the division.
- Data matching is completed using a secure data transfer interface and only as allowed by Federal and State law.

## **7. Priority of Service for Veterans**

Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act, codified at section 4215 of 38 U.S.C., which applies to all employment and training programs funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor. States should also describe the referral process for veterans determined to have a significant barrier to employment to receive services from the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.

### **Priority of Service for Veterans**

Utah will implement and monitor the priority of service provisions for veterans in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act. The Department of Workforce Services ensures the provision of priority of service with the following:

- All one-stop center staff are required to wear a magnetic badge that states "Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?"
- All one-stop center staff are trained to screen and identify potential covered persons. The question "Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?" is asked of every individual upon initial contact
- Individuals who self-register online on the Department of Workforce Services website as a potential covered persons are contacted by email and telephone. They are encouraged to visit their closest one-stop center for eligibility and services
- Small desktop posters asking covered persons to identify are displayed at every intake counter in the one-stop centers
- The Department of Workforce Services Publication 07-107, which provides an overview of the services for which they receive priority and a description of the application for those services, is distributed in the job connection areas of every one-stop center and given to individuals once they identify

- The question “Have you or a spouse ever served in the U.S. military?” is displayed as part of a looping presentation on a television in the job connection areas of all one-stop centers, encouraging covered individuals to self-identify

This provides individuals with multiple opportunities to self-identify their covered person status or to share the information about priority of service to family members, friends or neighbors.

One-stop center staff provide priority of service to job seekers by:

- Ensuring individuals register for services that reflect their status as a covered person
- Placing individuals at the top of a waiting list for a service if the service from the Department of Workforce Services has limited or restricted access (If there is no waiting list for that service, a waiting list is created with the individual at the top of the list)
- Providing services or referring an individual to the appropriate internal or external pathway for a service (if the service is not limited or restricted, the one-stop center staff provides services or refers the individual to the appropriate internal or external pathway for that service)
- Placing all qualified persons at the top of an employer's applicant list upon completion of a job match request, meaning the covered person receives referrals to open job announcements over non-covered persons
- Ensuring veterans who are determined to have a significant barrier to employment are referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program using the electronic 360 referral system

The Department of Workforce Services monitors its priority of services for veterans by visiting a required percentage of one-stop centers to ensure priority of service is provided to transitioning service members, veterans and their eligible spouses. The Department of Workforce Services is audited by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Education and Training Services every three years. In addition, onsite visits at employment centers are conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Education and Training Services State Director, and the Department of Workforce Services leadership throughout the year to verify that priority of service is provided to veterans and their eligible spouses.

Native American job seekers in Utah have access to Department of Workforce Services programs and services through local employment centers and online services offered through [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov). Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialists are assigned to the one-stop centers nearest to the Native American reservations and have developed relationships within tribal leadership to ensure tribal member veterans and spouses receive priority of service.

## **8. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities**

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff

training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

### **Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities**

Utah's one-stop service delivery system complies with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. The Department of Workforce Services' risk manager works in coordination with State Risk Management to conduct on-site reviews of one-stop centers and administrative offices. These reviews are conducted to ensure physical accessibility for customers as well as employees. Reviews are conducted every three years. The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Existing Facilities on the Achievable Barrier Removal Survey is used for the Risk Management review. However, Risk Management is currently working with the Department of Workforce Services and other state agencies in revising the tool. Additionally, the equal opportunity officer conducts statewide one-stop center reviews using portions of the Section 188 checklist to ensure programmatic accessibility for customers.

The Department of Workforce Services has Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 policy and procedures that is accessible to all staff via the Intranet to assist in providing accommodations for persons with disabilities seeking, applying for, or participating in one-stop center programs and services. The department's equal opportunity officer also serves as the Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 officer for individuals. In addition, every American Job Center has Licensed Clinical Social Workers onsite or available for individuals who need access to these services.

Regarding technology, all core partners' public websites, including all applications for programs and services, are Section 508 compliant. The Utah Department of Technology Services evaluates, tests and surveys all Department of Workforce Services technology services to ensure compliance. The Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Board of Education have technical teams who ensure compliance as well.

The Operations Committee ensures that the comprehensive one-stop certification and recertification criteria reflects the requirements outlined in section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). The certification and recertification criteria assess the one-stop center's current compliance with accessibility laws. It also examines the one-stop center's strategies and goals for continual improvement in its efforts to remove programmatic accessibility barriers.

## **9. Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners**

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners) will ensure that each one-stop center is able to meet the needs of English language learners, such as through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials.

### **Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals who are English Language Learners**

Utah will ensure that each one-stop center meets the needs of limited English proficient individuals, through established procedures, staff training, resources, and other materials. The staff in all one-stop

centers have an established procedure and pathway to access contracted interpreter services to serve individuals with limited English proficiency.

Adult Education provides interpretative services as needed. Necessary educational documents are available in the predominant foreign languages. Clients in need of English Language Learners services are referred to adult education programs that offer ELL services appropriate for the individual.

Training in assisting customers who are limited English proficient (LEP) is a required, annual, web-based program. All staff, in every division, are required to take the Limited English Proficient training and test their learned skills upon completion.

The State of Utah has several contractors who provide interpretive and translation services. The Department of Workforce Services utilizes two companies for these services, and has policy and procedures in place for staff to access an interpreter or send documents for translation.

Accessing Interpreter Services procedure and instruction card for CTS Language Link - Interactive voice System and Linguistica International have been created to provide Workforce Development Division and Office of Rehabilitation staff with procedures, phone numbers, account number and unit number information for accessing interpreter services for individuals.

The Workforce Development Division and Office of Rehabilitation have a procedure and instruction card for Accessing Interpreter Services using CTS Language Link- Interactive Voice Response System and Linguistica International to provide consistent and accurate service with access and charge code information for accessing interpretive services.

## **IV. Coordination with State Plan Programs**

Describe the methods used for joint planning and coordination among the core programs, and with the required one-stop partner programs and other programs and activities included in the Unified or Combined State Plan.

### **Coordination with State Plan Programs**

Utah's workforce system partners worked together to develop Utah's 2020-2023 Unified State Plan. The State Workforce Development Board and its committees, which include core and required partners, created the plan's vision and goals. The State Workforce Development Board approved the vision and goals. The committees developed strategies and assessment for each goal that connects to their committee action plans.

Core partner staff reviewed and provided the content for the first draft of the plan while required partner staff reviewed assigned sections. The second draft of the plan was sent out to the State Workforce Development Board and core and required partners for review. It was also posted on core partner websites for 30 days and presented at six town hall meetings for public comment.

The final draft was approved by the State Workforce Development Board.

Utah followed a similar process for the 2022 update of the state WIOA plan. All of the workforce system partners participated in the review process, including approval from the State Workforce Development Board and all core and required partners. The updated plan was posted for public input

on partner websites for 30 days and three virtual town hall meetings were held for public comment on January 10, 2022 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., January 11, 2022 from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and January 12, 2022 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

## V. Common Assurances (For All Core Programs)

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;	Yes
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;	Yes
3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;	Yes
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;	Yes
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;	Yes
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);	Yes
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable;	Yes

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;  | Yes |
| 9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;  | Yes |
| 10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);   | Yes |
| 11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and  | Yes |
| 12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor. | Yes |

## **VI. Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs**

The State must address all program-specific requirements in this section for the WIOA core programs regardless of whether the State submits either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

### **Program-specific Requirements for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Activities under Title I-B**

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include the following with respect to activities carried out under subtitle B—

#### **a. General Requirements**

##### **1. Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas**

A. Identify the regions and the local workforce development areas designated in the State

Utah has been designated as a single-area state.

B. Describe the process used for designating local areas, including procedures for determining whether the local area met the criteria for “performed successfully” and “sustained fiscal integrity” in accordance with 106(b)(2) and (3) of WIOA. Describe the process used for identifying regions and planning regions under section 106(a) of WIOA. This must include a description of how the State consulted with the local boards and chief elected officials in identifying the regions

Utah has been designated as a single-area state.

C. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 106(b)(5) of WIOA relating to designation of local areas



Utah has been designated as a single-area state.

**D. Provide the appeals process referred to in section 121(h)(2)(E) of WIOA relating to determinations for infrastructure funding**

Utah has been designated as a single-area state.

**2. Statewide Activities**

**A. Provide State policies or guidance for the statewide workforce development system and for use of State funds for workforce investment activities**

State policies for the statewide workforce development system can be found in the Workforce Development Division Policy Manual on the Department of Workforce Services website at [http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/Department of Workforce Services\\_Employment\\_and\\_Business\\_Services\\_Manual.htm](http://jobs.utah.gov/infosource/EmploymentBusinessManual/Department%20of%20Workforce%20Services_Employment_and_Business_Services_Manual.htm)

**B. Describe how the State intends to use Governor's set aside funding. Describe how the State will utilize Rapid Response funds to respond to layoffs and plant closings and coordinate services to quickly aid companies and their affected workers. States also should describe any layoff aversion strategies they have implemented to address at risk companies and workers**

Utah has centralized several functions for the governor's set-aside funding, such as finance, audit, human resources, and UWORKS to create efficiencies by reducing overhead costs at the local level. The state has been able to absorb these costs allowing more funds to be used on career services and training for customers.

Utah also utilizes the governor's set aside funding to disseminate the Eligible Training Provider List and other information on program services, accessibility, employer services, and success stories highlighting effective service delivery strategies. Funding is also used to conduct research and evaluation, provide technical assistance to one-stop partners to meet the goals of the state plan, support the State Workforce Development Board, develop staff, and monitor services.

Up to twenty-five percent of Dislocated Worker funds are reserved for Rapid Response activities and Additional Assistance funding to local areas. Funds provide rapid response services to as many companies and workers as possible regardless of the size of event, either through a formalized coordination with the state Dislocated Worker Unit when layoffs impact 15 or more workers, or through a local-area response provided by local workforce development specialists when layoffs impact less than 15 workers. Additional Assistance funds are used when local areas have a significant increase in the number of dislocated workers needing assistance due to layoffs and closure events, and the local area does not have adequate Formula funds to meet the needs.

The Dislocated Worker Unit is housed with the Workforce Development Division Program and Training at the Department of Workforce Services. The team includes the state Rapid Response coordinator, Dislocated Worker program specialist, Trade Adjustment Assistance program specialist and the state program specialist over the Eligible Training Provider List, ensuring coordination and the ability to design and deliver comprehensive services to dislocated workers. The Dislocated Worker

Unit follows up on all WARN notifications, trade petitions and trade-certified companies to ensure prompt delivery of services.

Local workforce development specialist staff play a key role in Rapid Response by building and maintaining relationships with employers, which is a key activity in receiving early notification for planned layoff or closure events. This allows critical time to plan for and customize services to specific events and workers' needs. During layoff or closure events, local workforce development specialist staff become part of Rapid Response delivery by coordinating with the Dislocated Workers Unite and delivering services as appropriate. This includes collaborating with core and required partners to quickly reconnect affected workers with employers seeking their skill set. The Dislocated Worker Unit gathers and tracks layoff/closure data and disseminates Layoff Notification Records used by the Department of Workforce Services management, area directors, workforce development specialist staff, Unemployment Insurance and the Workforce Research and Analysis team to help plan for and potentially avert layoffs or minimize the impact to workers by matching workers to available jobs, sponsoring job fairs, linking workers to job-search workshops and providing Dislocated Workers, Trade Adjustment Assistance and other appropriate career services. Rapid Response services, along with the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and the Eligibility Assessment program, has shortened and prevented periods of unemployment of dislocated workers.

Utah's Rapid Response program implements early intervention strategies which create opportunities to engage employers, community partners, economic development agencies and training providers to avert the negative impacts of layoffs by quickly moving workers from layoff to employment or training. During Rapid Response workshops, worker information is gathered to register them in UWORKS, expediting access to services. The UWORKS system identifies Rapid Response services, career services, company information and layoff or closure data; employment and training counselors use it to determine WIOA Dislocated Worker eligibility. Utah is also working to implement layoff-aversion strategies to address at-risk companies and workers.

### C. In addition, describe the State policies and procedures to provide Rapid Responses in cases of natural disasters including coordination with FEMA and other entities

Local staff work closely with the Department of Workforce Services administration and the state Dislocated Worker Unit to provide Rapid Response services to local areas and to coordinate dislocation events, including disaster situations. Through ongoing partnerships developed with local agencies, businesses and community partners, Dislocated Worker Unit and Workforce Development Specialist staff can respond immediately to emergency dislocations, including local-area disaster situations. Depending on the severity of the disaster, including FEMA-approved disasters, Dislocated Worker Unit and workforce development specialist staff are prepared to work independently or with first responders to conduct a preliminary assessment of the area to determine the need for funding to meet the career and training needs of individuals impacted by dislocation events, including coordinating services and providing temporary housing and other support needs of individuals displaced by such events.

The Department of Workforce Services executive director reports directly to the governor, ensuring coordination of necessary FEMA assistance or the need to apply for National Dislocated Worker Emergency Grant (DWEG) funds to address needs as a result of a disaster or national emergency. The Dislocated Worker Unit will assist in the development of and application for National Dislocated

Worker Emergency Grant funding, which may include funding to temporarily hire displaced individuals to provide humanitarian assistance and to clean up and repair facilities and lands. This includes career and training services to enhance the skills of the impacted individuals, better positioning them for employment after the completion of temporary employment disaster relief.

Department of Workforce Services ensures coordination between Rapid Response and other program services, including Unemployment Insurance emergency disaster funds, and has an emergency plan in place to address communication and information technology backup of case management systems as well as a staffing plan to address these events so critical services will not be disrupted.

D. Describe how the State provides early intervention (e.g., Rapid Response) to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition has been filed. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).) This description must include how the State disseminates benefit information to provide trade-affected workers in the groups identified in the TAA petitions with an accurate understanding of the provision of TAA benefits and services in such a way that they are transparent to the trade-affected dislocated worker applying for them (Trade Act Sec. 221(a)(2)(A) and Sec. 225; Governor-Secretary Agreement). Describe how the State will use funds that have been reserved for Rapid Response to provide services for every worker group that files a TAA petition.

Utah provides early intervention to worker groups on whose behalf a Trade Adjustment Assistance petition has been filed [Section 134 (a)(2)(A)]. During the initial employer contact, potential Trade Act impact is determined, and the petitioning process is initiated. Rapid Response workshops are initiated at petition filing and include information regarding the Trade Act program when appropriate. When a Trade Act Certification occurs after the layoff, a Rapid Response Trade Act-specific workshop/orientation is scheduled, and workers are notified using the Trade Act impact list. Also, Trade-impacted workers receive a Trade Certification letter, which identifies what they need to do to access services, and a Trade Act benefit brochure.

## **b. Adult and Dislocated Workers Program Requirements**

### **1. Work-Based Training Models**

If the State is utilizing work-based training models (e.g. on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, and customized training) as part of its training strategy and these strategies are not already discussed in other sections of the plan, describe the State's strategies for how these models ensure high quality training for both the participant and the employer.

#### **Work-Based Training Models**

The Department of Workforce Services uses work-based training models including on-the-job-training, internships, and registered apprenticeships. Each of these work-based training models provides participants with the opportunity to quickly develop occupational skills and expertise in their area of training. Additionally, while they are acquiring new skills and/or improving their existing skills, they may be earning a wage as well. Workforce development specialists reach out to employers to connect

interested participants with appropriate opportunities. Workforce Development Division career and education counselors and the State Office of Apprenticeship monitor work-based learning to ensure the participant is progressing and meeting their goals as well as the needs of the employer. Also, employers on the Utah State Workforce Development Board are informed about the different types of work-based training and provide valuable input in terms of workforce deficits they believe are not being addressed through traditional training programs that might be resolved through work-based learning programs.

Work-based learning programs allow employers to have an active role in the development of the participant's training plan. In close collaboration with the workforce development specialist and the participant's career and education counselor, employers tailor the training plan to meet both their business needs and the participant's occupational and professional development interests. Additionally, if an employer participates in an on-the-job-training or a Youth Employment Internship Opportunity (EIO), they are eligible to receive wage reimbursements while the participants are in training.

The Office of Rehabilitation develops and improves the diversity and availability of alternative training models and options. Examples include on-the-job-training, work-based training, apprenticeships, internships, temporary work experiences, Supported Employment (SE), Supported Job-Based Training (SJBT) and customized employment. The diversity of options allows individuals and counselors to customize a unique set of services to meet individual employment and training needs. These training pathways are supported through partnerships with other agencies, including employers, WIOA core and required partners, Utah State Board of Education, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD).

## **2. Registered Apprenticeship**

Describe how the State will incorporate Registered Apprenticeship into its strategy for service design and delivery (e.g., job center staff taking applications and conducting assessments).

### **Registered Apprenticeship**

The Apprenticeship Committee, a subcommittee of the State Workforce Development Board, includes core and required partners. It is a goal of this committee to support the expansion of the industries that utilize apprenticeship and diversify apprentices. As these opportunities are developed further, the Department of Workforce Services will market them to individuals.

Utah's labor exchange system allows for registered apprenticeship opportunities to be posted in UWORKS. This enhances the connection of individuals to available registered apprenticeship opportunities and assists employers in identifying qualified candidates for openings. These openings will also display on the Eligible Training Provider List if the sponsor has elected to be included on this list.

The Department of Workforce Services is coordinating with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship (OA) to identify registered apprenticeship sponsors in order to continue to grow the Eligible Training Provider List. In addition, the Department of Workforce Services is collaborating with the Apprenticeship Subcommittee of the State Workforce Development Board to better understand the needs of employers utilizing registered apprenticeships and any barriers that they face. In addition, the Department of Workforce Services will assist employers in connecting to the Office of

Apprenticeships and prepare them to register their program. This will increase the opportunities for job seekers to participate in apprenticeship programs.

The Department of Workforce Services was awarded an Apprenticeship State Expansion grant July 1, 2019. The purpose of this grant is to expand the occupations that utilize apprenticeship and diversify apprentices. Work related to the grant will be coordinated with the State Workforce Development Board and core WIOA partners to ensure that it is successful. This grant will end on June 30, 2022.

The Office of Rehabilitation supports the individual's pursuit of apprenticeship opportunities, including registered apprenticeships, and engages with employers for the purpose of developing apprenticeships that meet an individual's employment goals. The Office of Rehabilitation works directly with employers and post-secondary education institutions and coordinates with the Office of Apprenticeship.

### **3. Training Provider Eligibility Procedure**

Provide the procedure, eligibility criteria, and information requirements for determining training provider initial and continued eligibility, including Registered Apprenticeship programs (WIOA Section 122).

#### **Training Provider Eligibility Procedure**

Utah's procedure for training provider eligibility, including initial and continued eligibility, and the process for including registered apprenticeship programs on the Education and Training Provider List are on the Department of Workforce Services website.

### **4. Describe how the State will implement and monitor the priority for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with the requirements of WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), which applies to individualized career services and training services funded by the Adult Formula program**

Utah will implement and monitor the priority for public-assistance recipients, other low-income individuals or individuals who are deficient in basic skills in accordance with the requirements of WIOA Section 134(C)(3)(E). Department of Workforce Services will provide priority of service to WIOA Adult customers by focusing enrollments on at-risk individuals who are either low income, recipients of public assistance, or basic-skills deficient. Basic-skills deficiency will be verified with a referral from Title II Adult Education or English Language Acquisition program or the individual's current enrollment in Adult Education Services including English Language Learner and Basic Education programs. Individuals who do not meet these criteria will be referred to other assistance programs. In addition, current adult education assessments can be used as a measurement of basic skills.

To ensure the priority of service is being correctly implemented and monitored on a regular basis, Utah uses a combination of policy, technology, and internal audit.

### **5. Describe the State's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs**

Utah's criteria regarding local area transfer of funds between the adults and dislocated worker programs:

Funds may be transferred between the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs through a written request to the program manager, which must be approved by program and policy management and the finance manager before the transfer can be completed. Department of Workforce Services management considers the following to determine if there is an increased need for dislocated worker or adult funding:

- Available funds to transfer
- The area's participant demographics
- Obligation and expenditure levels

### c. With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA—

With respect to youth workforce investment activities authorized in section 129 of WIOA—

1. Identify the State-developed criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants or contracts for youth workforce investment activities and describe how the local boards will take into consideration the ability of the providers to meet performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for the youth program as described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii) of WIOA in awarding such grants or contracts.[11]

[11] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(V)

While Utah has a single State Workforce Development Board, criteria have been developed to award grants for youth workforce investment activities. The state-developed criteria will include evaluating the provider's ability to engage youth in the service elements that the provider is offering; collaborating with organizations and community partners regarding the specific qualifications necessary in order to provide the service elements that the provider is contracted to offer; and licensing or certifying the provider and staff who will be working directly with the youth that they are serving. Criteria will also include a description of evidence-based program models or practices and the process the provider uses to collect and utilize customer feedback. This will help ensure information is provided on whether performance accountability measures are met based on primary indicators of the youth program performance.

2. Describe the strategies the State will use to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B), including how it will leverage and align the core programs, any Combined State Plan partner programs included in this Plan, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and any other resources available.

Utah's strategies to achieve improved outcomes for out-of-school youth as described in 129(a)(1)(B) include leveraging and aligning core programs and other available resources:

- Elements discussing efforts to target out-of-school youth at the eligibility process by enrolling more low-income out-of-school youth increasing the number of out-of-school youth receiving funds and services (This creates a balance between Vocational Rehabilitation's goal of serving more in-school youth by providing services to those with disabilities while in-school and then transitioning over to Workforce Development services once they are considered out-of-school)
- Strategies for retaining customers once they enroll, by providing effective assessment interviews that address each customer's individual goals, skills, abilities, barriers, concerns and feedback to create a career pathway for each youth that is specific to their educational and employment goals
- Strategies for higher completion rates of secondary and post-secondary training as well as leadership development activities that help prepare youth for entering the workforce, which also includes increased opportunities for youth to participate in paid and unpaid work experiences that lead to more options for permanent employment
- Assistance with skill upgrade needs and remediation, especially for those who are basic skills deficient or ELL by more engaged connection and referral to Adult Education Services, Vocational Rehabilitation services for those with disabilities, and access to resources through higher education institutions as we work with those on the Education and Training Provider List for specific in-demand occupational training programs

3. Describe how the state will ensure that all 14 program elements described in WIOA section 129(c)(2) are made available and effectively implemented, including quality pre-apprenticeship programs under the work experience program element.  
[12]

[12] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(i)(I)

Utah will use funds to carry out the Youth Program elements described in WIOA section 129(C) (2). Staff will assess each individual to ensure the appropriate elements are provided based on specific circumstances and to meet performance outcomes. Monitoring the use of each service provided as well as the outcome of each service element. Utah will ensure that each of the 14 service elements are made available through in-house implementation, referring to outside agencies, community partners, businesses and agencies. This ensures that all 14 elements are available and being offered to each youth in the program. Funds will be used to provide:

- Support needed to complete secondary school education, including Adult Education, alternative high school education, packet completion or high school equivalency credential preparation, including tutoring with eligible tutors to assist with both secondary and post-secondary educational completion (This will be made available through referrals, connection and follow up with the youth to ensure they are getting the access to educational assistance that they need)
- Support to assist individuals with enrolling, attending, and completing Adult Education services, and/or alternative education services, which may include paying for high school equivalency credential practice tests and the supplies needed to complete their educational

goals (This will be made available through referral and resource connections through Utah State Board of Education as well as other providers of secondary and GED completion services)

- Paid employment opportunities for youth that have an academic and occupational component, which may include summer employment and other opportunities available throughout the school year such as internships, job shadowing, and OJT (This will be made available through employer collaboration)
- Training support to youth customers who are eligible under an ITA for tuition and required training related supplies needs. (Funds will also be used to support youth customers in pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and custom fit training. This will be made available by ensuring youth are aware of post-secondary training options through customer choice utilizing the Education and Training Provider List)
  - Support individuals completing leadership development activities, including, but not limited to, job search and life skills workshops, conferences, and team building activities
  - Funding for reasonable expenses required for participation in training and employment activities, provided and monitored by Workforce Development through a Training and Support Card
  - Referrals and connections to fee-for-service providers who offer mentoring to students either on a one-on-one or group basis
  - Individual counseling, family counseling, trauma counseling, substance abuse counseling and intervention, mental health counseling and medication management
  - Budgeting workshops, courses and activities
  - Entrepreneurial skills training, as a direct payment to the provider for the courses being offered to the individual
  - Career assessments for individuals during appointments with staff in order to guide them through appropriate career pathways.
  - Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training (staff will assist youth with educational searches on a one-on-one basis to help customers determine a best fit for them in completing training)

4. Provide the language contained in the State policy for “requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for out-of-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and for “requiring additional assistance to complete an education program, or to secure and hold employment” criterion for in-school youth specified in WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). If the state does not have a policy, describe how the state will ensure that local areas will have a policy for these criteria.



Utah policy meets the criteria specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VIII) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). According to Workforce Development policy, individuals who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment will include out-of-school youth who are Native American, refugees, victims or witnesses to domestic violence or any other type of abuse (at any point in time in their lives), or who have identified substance-abuse issues (within the last year). For in-school youth, this will include customers who are refugees, disabled, currently in Foster Care or aged out of Foster Care.

5. Include the State definition, as defined in law, for not attending school and attending school as specified in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(i). If State law does not define “not attending school” or “attending school,” indicate that is the case and provide the state policy for determining whether a youth is attending or not attending school.

Utah’s definition, as defined by law, for not attending school as defined in WIOA Section 129(a)(1)(B)(i) and Section 129(a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII) is as follows: Out-of-school youth means a student 16-24 years old who is not attending any school, excluding Adult Education, Job Corps or YouthBuild. This includes youth aged 16-24 years old who have not graduated from high school and are no longer enrolled in a K-12 program of instruction. In-school youth means a student 14-21 years old who is attending a traditional k-12 program of instruction, an alternative school setting, an Adult Education program (when an alternative school setting is not available for the customer to attend) or a post-secondary education program.

6. If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), include the State definition which must further define how to determine if an individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. If not using the portion of the definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), indicate that is the case.

Utah’s definition of basic skills deficiency is having less than a 9th-grade level of English reading, writing or mathematical skills based on results of an approved assessment.

#### **d. Single-area State Requirements**

In States where there is only one local workforce investment area, the governor serves as both the State and local chief elected official. In such cases, the State must submit any information required in the local plan (WIOA section 106(d)(2)). States with a single workforce area must include—

1. Any comments from the public comment period that represent disagreement with the Plan. (WIOA section 108(d)(3).)
2. The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor, if different from that for the State. (WIOA section 108(b)(15).)
3. A description of the type and availability of WIOA title I Youth activities and successful models, including for youth with disabilities. (WIOA section 108(b)(9).)

## Single-area State Requirements

There were no comments from the public comment period that represented disagreement with the Plan.

The Department of Workforce Services is the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the governor.

Utah will use funds to carry out the youth program elements described in WIOA section 129 (C). Staff will assess each individual to ensure the appropriate elements are provided based on specific circumstances and to meet performance outcomes. Youth with disabilities are provided appropriate activities and support through the WIOA Youth program and also through referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation. Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA Youth counselors work together to ensure the youth is able to meet all their needs and accomplish appropriate youth program activities.

### 4. A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners are outlined in the Infrastructure Funding Agreement, One-Stop Partner MOU, and Common Client Information Exchange and System Access Agreement.

### 5. The competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for title I activities.

Utah does not award sub-grants and contracts for title I activities.

### 6. How training services outlined in section 134 will be provided through individual training accounts and/or through contracts, and how such training approaches will be coordinated. Describe how the State will meet informed customer choice requirements regardless of training approach.

Training Services are provided to WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Workers through individual training accounts (ITA's). To determine eligibility for receiving training services through an ITA, customers must first meet eligibility requirements for Adult, Youth or Dislocated Worker. Once determined eligible, an assessment is completed to determine appropriateness for the selected training program. Appropriateness considerations include identifying if the customer has the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the program, whether there are employment opportunities in the selected occupation and whether the training will increase the customer's earning potential.

Customers are required to select an approved training program from the Education and Training Provider List. Customers are given the final choice on the training provider and program they select, but through the Education and Training Provider List they are given program information, outcomes and other tools to help them compare programs and find the appropriate program for them.

Once a customer has been determined appropriate and, through informed choice, has selected an approved training provider and program from the Education and Training Provider List, tuition and fee costs are paid directly to the provider. Any required books and supply costs are authorized onto a Training and Support Visa Card, which can be used at any merchant that accepts card payments to purchase the required items. Customers are required to provide receipts for the purchase of the

required books and supplies to ensure WIOA funds were spent appropriately.

7. How the State Board, in fulfilling Local Board functions, will coordinate title I activities with those activities under title II. Describe how the State Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

Utah's State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee reviewed all of the grant applications after they had been scored by agency staff from Workforce Development and Utah State Board of Education. The Executive Committee made recommendations regarding relevant elements of the grant to the full State Workforce Development Board for its approval. Utah State Board of Education accepted the State Workforce Development Board recommendations and incorporated them into the grant review process.

8. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system, including cooperative agreements with entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs and services.

Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system, including cooperative agreements with entities administering Rehabilitation Act programs and services.

Utah's MOU/IFA and data agreements are attached.

## **e. Waiver Requests (optional)**

States wanting to request waivers as part of their title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

1. Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;
2. Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;
3. Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;
4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

- A. Supporting employer engagement;
  - B. Connecting education and training strategies;
  - C. Supporting work-based learning;
  - D. Improving job and career results, and
  - E. Other guidance issued by the department.
5. Describes the individuals affected by the waiver, including how the waiver will impact services for disadvantaged populations or individuals with multiple barriers to employment; and
6. Describes the processes used to:
- A. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;
  - B. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;
  - C. Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;
  - D. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver.
  - E. Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.
7. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

### **Waiver Requests**

#### **Request for Waiver Renewal: Providing ITAs to In-School WIOA Youth Participants**

Utah requests a waiver on the requirement of providing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to only Out of School youth ages 18-24 enrolled in the WIA/WIOA Youth program.

As per current WIOA Regulations: 681.550:

"In order to enhance individual participant choice in their education and training plans and provide flexibility to service providers, the Department allows WIOA ITAs for out of school youth, ages 18-24 using WIOA youth funds when appropriate."

While this allows flexibility for serving out-of-school youth through post-secondary training, it does not give Utah the flexibility to continue to serve those youth customers enrolled as in-school who are preparing to graduate and extend their educational goals into post-secondary opportunities.

As of February 11, 2020, Utah has 85 in-school youth customers and 404 out-of-school youth customers enrolled in the WIA/WIOA program, 24 in-school youth are still enrolled in secondary education. Once those customers graduate, they will need continued support through post-secondary educational activities in order to obtain the certificates needed to find employment.

If the Department of Workforce Services is going to offer an adequate supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations, it cannot include only those who are determined to be out of school as part of that supply. Utah needs a waiver to support those with post-secondary educational goals past high school. In-school youth deserve the same opportunities for support as those being served as out-of-school youth, and it would be a disservice to those in-school customers to not support them past their high school diploma or its equivalent. Although it has been recommended to close the enrollment of those in-school youth who graduate and then re-enroll them as an out of school youth for the purpose of assisting them with an ITA after age 18, this poses a risk that the customer may no longer be eligible under the new barrier requirements. It also prevents the Department of Workforce Services from serving youth customers who graduate early (at 16 or 17 years of age) under an ITA, even if they are enrolled as an out of school youth once they earn their diploma.

Having to procure for Occupational Skills Training services for in-school youth would also create an unnecessary and undue burden on those providers who have already submitted the required information to be on Utah's Eligible Training Provider List. Because state schools and effective providers of post-secondary training have already been identified through the Eligible Training Provider List, having an additional process for procured providers for those in-school youth customers would create a duplication of effort for those providers that would not occur if those in-school youth wishing to access post-secondary training have access to the Eligible Training Provider List through an ITA. It has been difficult to encourage training providers to participate on the Eligible Training Provider List and the State has gone to great lengths to provide technical support and encouragement. This duplication and additional burden for providers could limit provider participation on the Eligible Training Provider List and in turn limit options for customer choice.

Because Utah already has an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in place and an electronic way to pay providers for educational services offered, both in-school and out of school youth will be served adequately under this waiver.

#### Waiver Plan:

The waiver request format follows WIOA Regulations section 681.550

1. Statutory regulations to be waived: WIOA section 681.550
2. Describe actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers: N/A
3. Waiver goals and measurable programmatic outcomes, if the waiver is granted:
  - Continue to serve the in-school youth already enrolled past high school completion through post-secondary training under an ITA
  - Continue to encourage education providers to remain current on the Eligible Training Provider List and provide technical assistance where needed to gather performance data that will help both in and out of school youth to receive services.

- Make a gradual shift toward enrolling more out of school youth and using those funds to support other activities, such as work experiences, leadership development activities, and mentoring, along with training activities under ITAs
- Continue to monitor training completions and outcomes for both in and out of school youth to meet the federal requirements for training completions and job placements for youth.

4. Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities such as: A. Supporting employer engagement B. Connecting education and training strategies C. Supporting work-based learning D. Improving job and career results; and E. Other guidance issued by the Department

Through allowing both in-school and out-of-school youth to use Individual Training accounts to access training services it opens up more training programs for the youth to select from as they will now be able to use the Eligible Training Provider List approved programs. By opening up the training program opportunities youth will be able to better connect to training programs that match their interest, support their learning style and better prepare them for employment and work-based learning. Youth who are able to complete occupational skills or adult education programs more easily may be more prepared to enter the job market and be a qualified employee. By serving in-school and out-school youth with the same policy and procedures allows for a continuity of services for all youth. All youth will be eligible to receive training services, connection to work-based learning and then employment and job search support. To better connect youth to work-based learning, they will be able to use the Eligible Training Provider List and find registered apprenticeships and also more easily find academic components that give them the credentials and support to be successful at an Internship or On-the-Job training placement.

5. Describe any individuals affected by the waiver:

The effect of this waiver would be positive for both in-school and out of school youth customers who are enrolled, as both groups would be supported with WIOA funding while completing post-secondary training activities. The effect of this waiver would also be positive for education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List as they will not be required to go through procurement in addition to the requirements of being on the Eligible Training Provider List. This will hopefully encourage providers to continue to be on the Eligible Training Provider List.

This waiver will be able to affect disadvantaged populations and youth with barriers to employment through ensuring both in-school and out-of-school youth are able to receive all of the youth program services, receive a continuity of services without disruption and have access to more training providers and programs. Both in-school and out of school youth may have significant barriers to employment and have had previous hardships that could impact their ability to be successful. It is important for these youth to be able to not only receive support but to be able to customize their services to match their interests and abilities. Without this waiver in-school youth would be restricted to select training programs where they are less prone to be successful and find suitable employment. Also without this waiver, in-school youth who would like to receive an ITA would have to be closed and enrolled as an out-of-school youth. This disrupts continuity of services and could potentially stop services that could greatly benefit a population who may be disadvantaged and have barriers to employment.

6. Describe the process used to:

a. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver:

- Continue to review in-school enrollments and those accessing post-secondary education through an ITA to assess whether the waiver continues to be necessary.
- Review financial reports quarterly to ensure out of school youth expenditures are continuing to exceed the in-school expenditures in order to meet the goal of spending 75 percent of funds on out of school youth.
- Biannual monitoring of providers available to youth on the ETPL to ensure there are options to foster customer choice.
- Make adjustments as necessary based on the number of in-school youth accessing ITAs and the amount of funds being spent on out of school youth.

b. Provide notice to any Local Board affected by the waiver:

Consistent with the general waiver request, the state will adhere to the publication requirements to ensure the broadest participation possible, including appropriate partners and interested parties such as labor, community based partners, and the State Workforce Development Board.

c. Provide any Local Board affected by the waiver with an opportunity to comment on the request: Utah is a single state and therefore no local board would be affected.

d. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver:

The Department of Workforce Services provides access to the waiver in order for businesses, organized labor, and the community to have an opportunity to make public comments on the waiver for a period of 30 days.

e. Collect and report information about the waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report:

The outcomes of this waiver will be reflected through the common performance measures, specifically credential attainment, measurable skill gain attainment and employment rates.

7. The Secretary may require that States provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver:

Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure Utah complies with waiver goals and measurable programmatic outcomes are met.

Utah continues to use a waiver to meet the requirement of providing Individual Training Accounts to Out-of-School Youth ages 18 to 24 enrolled in WIOA Youth. The waiver is used to assist in-school youth with maintaining focus on education and exploring career options that require post-secondary education. Having more youth interested and engaged in education leading to credential attainment allows Utah to increase its supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations. Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure Utah complies with waiver goals and meets measurable programmatic outcomes.

WIOA Youth Expenditures PY19	WIOA Youth Expenditures PY19	WIOA Youth Expenditures PY20	WIOA Youth Expenditures PY20
In School Youth %	Out of School Youth %	In School Youth %	Out of School Youth %
11%	89%	7%	93%

The above data shows that Workforce Services is exceeding the requirements for out-of-school youth spending. By the end of PY20, 92.91% percent of WIOA Youth funds were spent on out-of-school youth and only 7.09% percent on in-school youth.

A quarterly breakdown of in-school youth versus out-of-school youth expenditures indicates that out-of-school youth expenditures significantly exceeded the expenditure goal of 75%.

Qt 1 (07/01/20 – 09/30/20)	Qt 1 (07/01/20 – 09/30/20)	Qt 2 (10/01/20 – 12/31/20)	Qt 2 (10/01/20 – 12/31/20)	Qt 3 (01/01/21 – 03/31/21)	Qt 3 (01/01/21 – 03/31/21)	Qt 4 (04/01/21 – 06/30/21)	Qt 4 (04/01/21 – 06/30/21)
ISY%	OSY%	ISY%	OSY%	ISY%	OSY%	ISY%	OSY%
11%	89%	4%	96%	7%	93%	7%	93%

Out of the 137 in-school youth served in PY20, 42 youth (30.66%) were working toward obtaining a post-secondary credential. The remaining in-school youth were working on completing secondary school requirements with the intent to eventually enroll in post-secondary education.

Workforce Services has maintained its partnership with John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and administers the Education and Training Voucher program by serving in-school youth preparing for post-secondary education. This federally funded program is designed to assist foster care youth, or youth who have aged out of foster care, with the support needed to complete post-secondary education and obtain employment. In Utah, a WIOA co-enrollment is required to administer the Education and Training Voucher program to foster care youth. Since most of the foster care youth are in-school youth, the waiver enables Workforce Services to serve this at-risk population and positively impact their ability to earn post-secondary credentials, enter the workforce and become contributing members of society. Utah served 162 Education Training Voucher youth during PY20.

The waiver positively impacted education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as they were not required to go through procurement in addition to completing the requirements to be on the list. This encourages providers to continue to be on the ETPL, benefitting both the in-school and out-of-school youth. Utah continues to certify the education providers and monitor their performance on a yearly basis.

## Title I-B Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

### Adult Program Performance Indicators



## **Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two

full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	72.0	79.2	72.0	79.2
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	72.0	76.9	72.0	76.9
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	6,600	6,600	6,000.00	6,600

Credential Attainment Rate	68.0	72.0	68.0	72.0
Measurable Skill Gains	55.0	55.0	55.0	55.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## Dislocated Program Performance Indicators

### Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	7,950.00	8,500	7,950.00	8,500
Credential Attainment Rate	70.0	73.0	70.0	73.0
Measurable Skill Gains	54.0	54.0	54.0	54.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## Youth Program Performance Indicators

### Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021.

However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	69.0	71.7	69.0	71.7
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	67.0	72.0	67.0	72.0
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	3,300.00	3,300	3,300.00	3,300
Credential Attainment Rate	54.0	54.0	54.0	54.0
Measurable Skill Gains	54.0	54.0	54.0	54.0
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## **Program-Specific Requirements for Wagner-Peyser Program (Employment Services)**

All Program-Specific Requirements provided for the WIOA core programs in this section must be addressed for either a Unified or Combined State Plan.

### **a. Employment Service Staff**

1. Describe how the State will staff the provision of labor exchange services under the Wagner-Peyser Act, such as through State employees, including but not limited to state merit staff employees, staff of a subrecipient, or some combination thereof.

Utah will continue to utilize state merit staff employees.

2. Describe how the State will utilize professional development activities for Employment Service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers

Utah provides professional development activities for employment service staff to ensure staff is able to provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers. Department of Workforce Services accomplishes this through:

- New and Incumbent Employee Training: A comprehensive core training for all new staff that utilizes a combination of in-person training and multimedia, including skills review assessment, follow-up activities and focused, targeted one-on-one support. In addition to core training, staff receive program-specific training and Just-in-Time training supporting implementation of policy, procedures and needed skills. Employees register and complete skills reviews for training in the Department of Workforce Services' Career Management System.
- Professional Development: Incumbent staff receive skills-based training, resource information, best-practice exchange, and professional development opportunities

3. Describe strategies developed to support training and awareness across core programs and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training provided for Employment Services and WIOA staff on identification of UI eligibility issues and referral to UI staff for adjudication

Core program staff receive Unemployment Insurance Program training through a comprehensive core training for all staff utilizing a combination of in-person and multi-media training, including skills review assessment, follow up activities and targeted one-on-one support. This training includes information on how to efficiently assist claimants with their Unemployment Insurance claim filing and refer to Unemployment Insurance staff for adjudication. Staff have access to Unemployment Insurance law and policy manuals through an internal system, and Unemployment Insurance changes are communicated or trained through a monthly training process. Unemployment Insurance has many resource guides and lists that can be found on the Department of Workforce Services website. These are available to help individuals and those working in other programs to be aware of the Unemployment Insurance guidelines. Integration between UWORKS and CUBS (the computer program used by Unemployment Insurance) facilitates awareness.

Staff are trained to ask individuals who are in one-stop centers if they were recently employed and the nature of their separation from employment. By asking this question, staff are able to determine if applying for Unemployment Insurance is appropriate and assist them in the process. They also have been trained on how to access trained Unemployment Insurance staff to resolve and handle Unemployment Insurance issues. One option is access to the Unemployment Insurance Help Desk that is dedicated to supporting one-stop center staff who may call or email and receive immediate



help with unemployment issues for specific cases or escalated situations. Another option is educating customers about the online chat feature available through the Unemployment Insurance interactive voice response system where customers can be immediately assisted during business hours.

**b. Explain how the State will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers, as required by WIOA as a career service**

Utah will provide information and meaningful assistance to individuals requesting assistance filing a claim for unemployment compensation through one-stop centers. Whether an individual contacts Unemployment Insurance from home or from the one-stop center, they receive the highest level of customer service. To ensure this level of service, Unemployment Insurance has implemented an enhanced interactive voice response system, online chats, and a direct access help desk resources for the on-site one-stop center staff providing in-person, meaningful assistance. The meaningful assistance that Unemployment Insurance provides includes:

- Interactive voice response claim status: Claimants accessing interactive voice response receive their claim status at the beginning of their call, which helps resolve basic question calls and results in lower hold times
- The option for callbacks: When wait times are elevated, individuals have the option to choose a call back rather than waiting on the phone for a representative to become available
- More effective direction for calls: Claimants and employers are directed to the same interactive voice response tree with the distinction between benefits questions and contributions questions made at the beginning of the system, which decreases the number of misdirected calls
- More effective direction for online chats: Claimants and employers are provided with portals to the online chat system at multiple places throughout the Unemployment Insurance webpage, and the system is configured to direct them to the team that can assist them
- Online Chat: Individuals accessing services through the one-stop employment centers have the option of contacting the Unemployment Insurance division through the interactive voice response system or online chat feature directly from the Unemployment Insurance webpage
- Help Desk for staff at the employment center: An employment counselor can call a direct number for the Unemployment Insurance Help Desk and be connected with an Unemployment Insurance specialist in less than 30 seconds to handle escalated situations

**c. Describe the State's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to UI claimants and other unemployed individuals**

Utah's strategy for providing reemployment assistance to Unemployment Insurance claimants and other unemployed individuals involves:

- Staff support
  - One-stop centers operate throughout Utah. A primary goal of the one-stop delivery system is to serve as the anchor for a statewide workforce development system that effectively responds to the needs of employers, job seekers and the community. The one-stop system provides a comprehensive employment exchange network serving as the connecting point for employers and job seekers. A one-stop center provides direct services or referrals for services through partner agencies to meet the

individual's needs. One-stop centers develop and maintain strong relationships with partner agencies to maintain efficiency and avoid duplication of services.

- Department of Workforce Services provides core curriculum and training to ensure that all one-stop center staff understand and adhere to federal, state, and the Department of Workforce Services' policy and procedures. One-stop center staff can access all policy and procedures online, or contact state and service-area program specialists to ask questions or obtain policy and procedure clarifications. In addition, supervisors play a very important role in training staff on policy, procedures, and local pathways.
- Department of Workforce Services staff focus on the same overall goal of helping individuals obtain the services and support needed to find employment, regardless of which of the four key business processes they are responsible for: eligibility, employment exchange, employment counseling or unemployment insurance. Outcome targets ensure the Department of Workforce Services achieves its goal of developing the workforce.
- Department of Workforce Services information technology and online services staff continually evaluates the department website's usability and functionality to ensure all users are able to navigate this site.

#### Unemployed individuals

- Individuals can access services from the Department of Workforce Services by visiting one-stop centers or using online services, which are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The website allows individuals to enter resumes, search for job openings, learn about careers, access economic information, apply for training services, file for unemployment insurance benefits and find links to other useful resources. In addition, individuals may apply online for financial services, food stamps, child care, medical, and other supportive service benefits.
- Individuals, throughout the state, can access the same level of service regardless of their location. One-stop centers have a common appearance and feel, including signage. However, local areas have flexibility in establishing pathways driven by resources and local needs.
- Unemployment Insurance claimants, qualified or not, receive a resource document from the department after they have filed for benefits. This is included with the Notice of Monetary Determination and is available online at [jobs.utah.gov/ui/resources.html](http://jobs.utah.gov/ui/resources.html). When a claimant files, they receive labor market information regarding their selected occupation and available local job postings.
- Unemployment insurance claimants who do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within ten business days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves creating a profile on Utah's labor-exchange system, completing an online assessment and taking anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment. The online workshops cover topics such as networking, online job search, resumes and interviewing. More than 70 percent of Unemployment Insurance claimants are referred to complete the labor exchange registration and online assessment.

- The Unemployment Insurance division partners with the Workforce Development Division to offer targeted, in-person workshops through the Reemployment Support System (RSS). Claimants are referred in two ways. First, workshop presenters select claimants who are identified as most likely to exhaust Unemployment Insurance benefits, and, second, RESEA counselors can refer specific claimants to attend. Claimants who fail to report as scheduled, without good cause, are automatically denied Unemployment Insurance benefits.
- Employment counselors in the Workforce Development Division conduct targeted outreach to Unemployment Insurance claimants who self-identify as veterans and claimants who have only four weeks remaining on their claims. This is one more tool to connect claimants with resources available through one-stop centers across the state.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic several strategies were implemented to support employers and quickly reemploy Utahns. In Wasatch Front South, healthcare was identified as an in-demand industry. Employers were targeted by using lists of healthcare employers through a “now hiring” outreach list. These employers were contacted and educated on Workforce Services employer services and offered the opportunity to participate in statewide virtual job fairs and local employer panels.
- As the demand for business hiring began to exceed the available labor supply, AJC’s shifted the strategies for employer engagement. For example, workforce development specialists assist employers with posting jobs, consult with them about recruitment strategies, and provide direct support for filling certain positions. Staff utilized the increase in demand for labor as an opportunity to develop jobs for case managed customers from targeted populations.
- Rural areas of the state focus on the unique needs of job seekers and employers located in remote areas of Utah. Staff encourage employers to hire individuals who live in rural areas and help educate employers on remote work benefits. A workshop has been developed to support this effort, it is called Transferable Skills and Related Occupations. This workshop is used to assist job seekers who have been laid off from jobs understand how their current skills can be used to get a different job. The workshop emphasizes jobs that can be done from a remote location.

#### Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

One of the ways the state is providing reemployment assistance to Unemployment Insurance claimants is through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. The RESEA program is a statewide program with support of Unemployment Insurance claimants in 23 locations across the state. Claimants are chosen for the program based on a profiling score compiled when they first file for benefits, which identifies those “most likely to exhaust.”

The initial appointments typically last two hours, during which time the counselors:

- Review labor-market information specific to the customer’s needs
- Ensure that registration with the state jobs bank is completed
- Provide an orientation to the one-stop services

- Create an individualized reemployment plan
- Review and assist with a job-ready résumé by appointment completion
- Provide resources based on the individual customer's needs, including a referral to training programs as appropriate
- Refer customers to or schedule them for a variety of workshops
- Assist with tools for networking and train on online resources
- Provide mock interviews
- Provide job referrals

In addition to the RESEA program, Unemployment Insurance maintains a robust connection to labor-exchange services with American Job Centers. This includes working closely with local American Job staff to ensure individuals are co-enrolled in partner programs when appropriate, sharing interfaces within the UWORKS system, developing reemployment strategies to respond to the current situation and assist individuals at the local level, and providing reemployment workshops.

**d. Describe how the State will use W-P funds to support UI claimants, and the communication between W-P and UI, as appropriate including the following:**

**1. Coordination of and provision of labor exchange services for UI claimants as required by the Wagner-Peyser Act;**

Coordination of labor-exchange services for Unemployment Insurance claimants is provided through the Department of Workforce Services website. Claimants can sign into their accounts and see the status of their unemployment claim. The same page contains a link to search for work, where they can enter keywords to search for jobs. They are able to set parameters for the county they want to search and the number of miles from a specified ZIP code. In addition, a labor-market information link shows the wages of different occupations and the type of degree needed for those occupations. They are also able to inquire about how many projected job openings are available in Utah each year for a particular occupation.

**2. Registration of UI claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law;**

Registration of Unemployment Insurance claimants with the State's employment service if required by State law

Individuals that do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within ten days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves completing a profile on the labor-exchange system, completing an online assessment, and completing anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment. The virtual workshops, created in response to the conditions of the COVID19 pandemic, are effective resources that provide access to important information for individuals seeking employment and training throughout the state. The Department of Workforce Services has a skillful workshop team consisting of eight workshop

presenters throughout the state. In addition to presenting workshops, the team offers individualized career coaching to participants following each workshop.

### 3. Administration of the work test for the State unemployment compensation system, including making eligibility assessments (for referral to UI adjudication, if needed), and providing job finding and placement services for UI claimants; and

Individuals who do not qualify for a work-search deferral are required to register for work within ten days of filing an initial or additional/reopened claim. The registration process involves completing a profile on UWORKS, completing an online assessment, and completing anywhere from zero to five online workshops based on the outcome of the assessment. They are required to search for work and make at least four job contacts per week. An eligibility team randomly reviews the work-search contacts to ensure claimants are making a proper work search and create eligibility issues if they are not meeting the work-search requirements. These issues could result in a denial of benefits.

The Unemployment Insurance division partners with the Workforce Development Division to offer targeted, in-person workshops through the automated Reemployment Support System. Workshop presenters select groups of individuals, and RESEA counselors refer individuals to attend. Counselors in the Workforce Development Division conduct targeted outreach to claimants who self-identify as veterans and claimants who have only four weeks remaining on their claims. This is one more tool to connect Unemployment Insurance claimants with resources available through one-stop centers across the state.

### 4. Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources.

Provision of referrals to and application assistance for training and education programs and resources are provided through [jobs.utah.gov](http://jobs.utah.gov). Individuals can find information on training resources, eligible training providers, Department of Workforce Services-funded training programs, and alternative funding. They can also apply for training services online or in person at a one-stop center and may be referred to training programs during the course of a RESEA appointment.

Department of Workforce Services provides information and workshops focused primarily on “How to get the job you want,” which expands beyond traditional résumé and interview skills development into:

- Articulating how an individual’s skills align with job requirements
- Capitalizing on non-professional experiences to demonstrate leadership, organization, time management, communication skills, etc.

e. **Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP).** Each State agency must develop an AOP every four years as part of the Unified or Combined State Plan required under sections 102 or 103 of WIOA. The AOP must include an assessment of need. An assessment need describes the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

1. **Assessment of Need.** Provide an assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers in the area based on past and projected agricultural and farmworker activity in the State. Such needs may include but are not limited to: employment, training, and housing.

#### **Assessment of Need**

In collaboration with Utah's National Farm Worker Jobs Program Grantee (NFJP), Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) staff, and Utah's State Monitor Advocate (SMA) the major needs and issues facing Utah's farm workers have been identified as the current immigration climate, language barriers, and low wages.

During the past few years, many farm workers have been observed as unwilling to seek assistance from available resources. Deportation concerns for family members has made the farm workers reluctant to utilize community services. Farmworkers are either reluctant to give contact information or provide incorrect data for fear of being reported.

Although more farm workers are becoming English proficient, the majority continue with English as a second language barrier. This contributes to their lack of interest in furthering their education and training and pursuing other job opportunities.

The poverty rate among farm workers and need for higher wages contributes to the lack of interest in additional education and training. Most farm worker families do not believe they have opportunities to transition into other work. Wages are slowly rising due to the adverse effect wage rate (AEWR). Employers are having a difficult time finding workers, so they must offer higher wages to attract employees.

2. An assessment of the agricultural activity in the State means: 1) Identifying the top five labor-intensive crops, the months of heavy activity, and the geographic area of prime activity; 2) Summarize the agricultural employers' needs in the State (i.e. are they predominantly hiring local or foreign workers, are they expressing that there is a scarcity in the agricultural workforce); and 3) Identifying any economic, natural, or other factors that are affecting agriculture in the State or any projected factors that will affect agriculture in the State

1) Information from the Utah Department of Agriculture, Utah's NFJP grantee, outreach staff and the SMA, shows Utah's top five labor intensive crops as: cherries, apples, corn, tomatoes, and melons. The months of heaviest activity are during the harvest season of July - September. The counties with prime crop activities are: Box Elder, Weber, Davis, and Utah counties.

2) Employers have continually expressed concern regarding a labor shortage in all areas of agriculture as Utah reports a September 2021 unemployment rate of 2.4%. Employers have also expressed concerns over the quality and dependability of the workforce as many workers show up for several days and do not return. Other major issues employers face are increased costs (wages, taxes, land leases, tariffs, etc.) while prices they are receiving for their products are stagnant. Employers are cutting costs in any way possible and some are operating with a year-end

deficit. Employers believe they can operate in this manner for a few more years, but if commodity prices don't increase, they will have to cease operations.

3) Other factors that are affecting agriculture in Utah include a steady decrease in available farmland. Every year more land is developed for housing or commercial properties. Wages are also a concern with the H2A program wages (AEWR) raising to levels employers believe are unsustainable rates for them to continue operations.

An additional factor was the impact of COVID-19 on both the farmworker and the farmer. As a substantial number of agricultural workers come from abroad, many farmers found themselves scrambling to meet demands with limited workers. The reduced workforce created an additional load on all parties involved during the growing and harvesting period.

3. An assessment of the unique needs of farmworkers means summarizing Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) characteristics (including if they are predominantly from certain countries, what language(s) they speak, the approximate number of Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in the State during peak season and during low season, and whether they tend to be migrant, seasonal, or year-round farmworkers). This information must take into account data supplied by WIOA Section 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantees, other Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker organizations, employer organizations, and State and/or Federal agency data sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration

The majority of the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers are from Mexico and Peru, while Chile is a secondary source for the agriculture workforce. For most workers, Spanish is their native language. The workers that fit the WIOA definition for Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers are predominantly seasonal, with an extremely low migrant worker presence in Utah. The peak times are during harvest months of July - September. Information gathered from the experience and outreach of the SMA, NFJP, and SWA staff, and other organizations from the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers Coalition report there are approximately 500 domestic workers and 1,700 H-2A workers.

#### 4. Outreach Activities

The local offices outreach activities must be designed to meet the needs of Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in the State and to locate and contact Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers who are not being reached through normal intake activities. Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

Utah has outreach activities designed to meet the needs of Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers in the state and for locating and contacting those who aren't being reached through normal intake activities.

##### A. Contacting farmworkers who are not being reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the employment service offices

The Utah State Workforce Agency utilizes multiple methods to contact farm workers who cannot be reached by the normal intake activities conducted by the one-stop centers. As mentioned above, the Department of Workforce Services conducts outreach activities through joint activities with partners

from the Utah Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Coalition. Coalition members share events and gatherings of Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers and invite other organizations to join and offer their services.

The State Workforce Agency outreach worker is active in joint efforts with the NFJP. They meet regularly and coordinate outreach efforts and when possible perform outreach together. Farm workers are also contacted by the Department of Workforce Services housing inspectors for the H-2A Foreign Labor Certification Program that are onsite for housing inspections. During inspections, farm workers receive information about available services.

**B. Providing technical assistance to outreach staff.** Technical assistance must include trainings, conferences, additional resources, and increased collaboration with other organizations on topics such as one-stop center services (i.e. availability of referrals to training, supportive services, and career services, as well as specific employment opportunities), the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System ("Complaint System" described at 20 CFR 658 Subpart E), information on the other organizations serving Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in the area, and a basic summary of farmworker rights, including their rights with respect to the terms and conditions of employment.

Utah's State Monitor Advocate meets regularly with outreach staff. Technical assistance is provided when needed. New information and refresher training are provided regularly. The complaint system is reviewed each month and all complaints are discussed and assistance is provided to resolve complaints or refer them to the proper organization.

Outreach staff attend Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Coalition meetings and attend events held by other organizations. Coalition members are invited to participate in the outreach events and assist by posting and distributing marketing materials and helping on-site staff with the event.

**C. Increasing outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and the training on identification of UI eligibility issues**

Utah's outreach worker is a member of the connections team. This team has knowledge of all core programs to assist individuals who walk-in the center. All connections workers complete a yearly proficiency training that is reviewed by their managers to ensure they are knowledgeable about core programs. Unemployment Insurance is included in the proficiency training.

**D. Providing State merit staff outreach workers professional development activities to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both jobseekers and employers**

The Department of Workforce Services provides state merit staff workers with many opportunities for professional development. Internally there are trainings as frequently as quarterly or bi-annually on new and innovative ways to work with individuals and employers. There is also mandatory online training which includes sexual harassment training. From system enhancements to new services offered, this training keeps staff on the cutting edge of services available to the at-risk populations.



Additionally, the department offers yearly regional and national conferences that offer opportunities for networking, learning vehicles for merit staff, and relationship building with community and federal partners.

#### E. Coordinating outreach efforts with NFJP grantees as well as with public and private community service agencies and MSFW groups

The outreach worker and outreach staff at Futures Through Training, Utah's NFJP, meet regularly in person, virtually, or via telephone to coordinate services provided to employers and farmworkers. Coordination with community partners in both the public and private sectors meets monthly. During these meetings, needs and issues are identified in the agricultural community, leveraging resources to meet the needs of stakeholders, and recruiting additional partners to the coalition.

#### 5. Services provided to farmworkers and agricultural employers through the one-stop delivery system

Describe the State agency's proposed strategies for:

A. Providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system. This includes:

- i. How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers
- ii. How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services

Utah is able to provide the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community, both farmworkers and agricultural employers, through the one-stop delivery system.

i. The Department of Workforce Services offers career services to all individuals, including Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers. This includes work-readiness activities, résumé preparation and printing, access to email accounts, employment exchange activities, review and referrals to job orders, workshops, and career counseling. Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers who are unable to obtain employment through core services are referred to an employment counselor for career and training services that include assessments, employment plans and career counseling. Weber and Utah counties have the highest populations of Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, so Futures Through Training and the Department of Workforce Services collaborate in an effort to streamline services and coordinate funds to best serve individuals with training. Services are reviewed quarterly, and reports are prepared by the Utah Monitor Advocate at the state and economic service area levels to ensure that services provided to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers are "qualitatively equivalent and quantitatively proportionate" compared to non-Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers seeking services.

ii. How the state serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Outreach staff will focus on continuing to develop better working relationships with agriculture employers. Assisting employers is a key component to the overall economic health of Utah's agriculture industry and these relationships provide access to farmworkers. Assisting employers with

recruiting, required posters, and employment law, among other resources, enable employers to focus on farming.

Utah has created a website, <https://getutahfarmjobs.com>, to assist employers with recruiting workers. The website provides a direct, live view of the Department of Workforce Services' dot-gov website through the window of a dot-com. Through the use of a discrete marketing strategy, farmworkers can view available jobs in agriculture, apply for services offered in the one-stop center, obtain locations of the one-stop centers and directly access the ESS complaint system. Employers can post jobs and view and contact applicants that are registered for work. The website also offers information on each of the participating members of the coalition, services and resources they provide to the agriculture community, and links to their individual websites and contact information. Lastly, though written in English, this website can be translated into over 50 different languages, including Spanish, the primary language spoken by Utah's farmworkers.

These services are also marketed to employers through local workforce development staff that work solely with employers to provide them with access and knowledge of available services.

## **B. Marketing the employment service complaint system to farmworkers and other farmworker advocacy groups**

The employment service complaint process is a high priority in the State Workforce Agency daily operations. With guidance from the Department of Labor Regional Monitor Advocate, Utah implemented the Department of Labor's preferred complaint form and shared it with partners. At each meeting the State Monitor Advocate and outreach staff remind the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Coalition partners about the process and importance of reporting any and all complaints to the State Workforce Agency. Outreach staff and the State Monitor Advocate inform Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers and other organizations of the state's desire to be informed of any complaints. A tracking sheet has been created to ensure complaints are addressed timely and resolved or referred to the proper enforcement agency.

## **C. Marketing the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. Workers (ARS) to agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such publicity.**

Agricultural employers are provided the same level of service as other employers, including public job recruitment listings, labor market information, interview space at local employment centers and assistance from local workforce development specialists. Also, our outreach worker has been trained to first approach the employers and offer services to them before asking to speak with their farm workers which has helped create better relationships with our farmers.

Agricultural employers who are unable to fill their labor needs through the recruitment of United States citizens and other eligible non-citizens, are provided with information on the H-2A program. The Department of Workforce Services assists H-2A employers with employee recruitment and meeting the H2A program requirements. Utah's SMA handles this H2A recruitment. With a working knowledge of the various foreign labor certification programs and the Agricultural Recruitment System provided by DOL, the SMA can provide optimal solutions to employers to sufficiently meet their labor demand.

# **6. Other Requirements**

## **A. Collaboration**

Describe any collaborative agreements the state workforce agency (SWA) has with other Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker service providers including NFJP grantees and other service providers. Describe how the SWA intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partners over the next four years (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements).

The Department of Workforce Services implemented an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2018 with the NFJP grantee Futures Through Training. Collaboration has improved based on this agreement. Through this MOU, joint outreach efforts have been established, communication has improved, the outreach worker attends NFJP staff meetings, and the department exchanges wage information with Futures Through Training to validate employment data for NFJP participants. As issues are identified in coalition meetings and other areas of outreach that cannot be addressed by the participants at the table, it is determined who has the resources available to handle the issues and new partnerships are created.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Colation's goal during 2021 is to continue collaborating with our community partners in identifying resources that will benefit the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker population. As this collaboration continues and resources are leveraged, valuable services will be provided to farm workers in the State of Utah.

## B. Review and Public Comment

In developing the AOP, the SWA must solicit information and suggestions from NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other interested organizations. In addition, at least 45 calendar days before submitting its final AOP, the SWA must provide a proposed plan to NFJP grantees, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations, and other organizations expressing an interest and allow at least 30 days for review and comment. The SWA must: 1) Consider any comments received in formulating its final proposed AOP; 2) Inform all commenting parties in writing whether their comments have been incorporated and, if not, the reasons therefore; and 3) Transmit the comments and recommendations received and its responses with the submission of the AOP.

The AOP must include a statement confirming NFJP grantees, other appropriate MSFW groups, public agencies, agricultural employer organizations and other interested employer organizations have been given an opportunity to comment on the AOP. Include the list of organizations from which information and suggestions were solicited, any comments received, and responses to those comments.

The Utah State Workforce Agency provided a copy of the final proposed Agricultural Outreach Plan for review and public comment to all of the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker coalition members and community partners, listed below:

- Futures Through Training (Utah's NFJP Grantee)
- The Mexican Consulate
- Provo School District
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
- Salt Lake School District

- Bear River Health Department
- Salt Lake County Safety Sits
- Centro De La Familia of Utah
- Community Health Centers of Utah

### C. Data Assessment

Review the previous four years Wagner-Peyser data reports on performance. Note whether the State has been meeting its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. If it has not met these goals, explain why the State believes such goals were not met and how the State intends to improve its provision of services in order to meet such goals.

Utah continues to meet all of the Equity Ratio Indicators. Utah continues to increase career and supportive services to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers. Due to the population density of Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in the State of Utah, in many cases, travel to a one-stop center is not feasible for most Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers. Utah's outreach worker has been tasked with contacting Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers in our system to attempt Job Development activity to increase career services.

### D. Assessment of Progress

The plan must include an explanation of what was achieved based on the previous AOP, what was not achieved and an explanation as to why the State believes the goals were not achieved, and how the State intends to remedy the gaps of achievement in the coming year.

Based on the previous Agricultural Outreach Plan, outreach efficiency and effectiveness has been enhanced. The addition of an outreach worker, increased collaboration and outreach efforts with the NFJP, improved organization of outreach events, and a focus on the complaint system have enhanced the advocacy offered to Utah's Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers. The face-to-face contact and assistance with Utah's Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers are continuing to grow.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted many situations, Utah was able to maintain in-person outreach to the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker community.

Utah's agriculture employer goals continue to be a focus through coordinating resources offered by Migrant Seasonal Farmworker outreach and workforce development staff.

### E. State Monitor Advocate

The plan must contain a statement confirming the State Monitor Advocate has reviewed and approved the AOP.

The Utah Monitor Advocate, as an employee of the Department of Workforce Services, was responsible for the compilation of the 2020 Utah Agricultural Outreach Plan and 2022 modification. This Outreach Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Monitor Advocate. The Department of Workforce Services will afford all coalition members the opportunity to review and comment on this plan as required during the 30-day comment period of the Unified State Plan.

## Wagner-Peyser Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time (sec 121(e)(3));	Yes
2. If the State has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the State agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;	Yes
3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser Act services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and	Yes
4. SWA officials:	Yes
1) Initiate the discontinuation of services;	
2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued;	
3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued;	
4) Approve corrective action plans;	
5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days;	
6) Enter into agreements with State and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and	
7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.	

## Wagner Peyser Program Performance Indicators

### Performance Goals for the Core Programs

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A "baseline" indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, "baseline" indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as "baseline" based on the likelihood of a State

having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to

serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	67.0	74.3	67.0	74.3
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	68.0	72.8	68.0	72.8
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	5,900.00	6,400	5,900.00	6,400
Credential Attainment Rate	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Measurable Skill Gains	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## Program-specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs

The Unified or Combined State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to adult education and literacy programs and activities under title II of WIOA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

### a. Aligning of Content Standards

Describe how the eligible agency has aligned its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Utah has aligned adult education content standards with the state-adopted challenging academic content standards adopted under Section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended [20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)]. The Utah State Board of Education, Adult Education Department is governed by Board Rule R-277-733 - Adult Education which can be viewed online at <https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/40acd13e-0b37-4959-9475-c8a079500e45>

Adult Education Board Rules require adult education programs offering Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) curriculum to follow Utah Core Standards infused with OCTAE-developed College and Career Readiness Standards as the basis for instruction leading to an Adult Education Secondary Diploma. Staff teaching courses leading to an Adult Education Secondary Diploma must be licensed as defined in the Utah Adult Education Policies and Procedures Guide Section 3 - Program Design E. Adult education programs are monitored on a rotation schedule whereby curricula are reviewed regularly by the monitoring team for compliance.

Adult Education-funded community-based organizations (CBO) offering English language instruction to non-native learners are required to ensure that curriculum is aligned to OCTAE-developed College and Career Readiness Standards at a minimum in Language Arts and Math. English Language Acquisition programs are to employ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)-certified instructors or individuals with an English Language Learner (ELL) endorsement. Non-licensed persons may teach under the supervision of licensed staff. Instructors employed in school district adult education programs are required to follow the hiring practices of the local school district.

#### b. Local Activities

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.

#### Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—



1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

**Special Rule.** Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

Utah will fund eligible providers to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be awarded based on a competitive application process following the 13 guidance points outlined in section 231(e). Program awards will be made on the basis of the application merit as measured on a scoring rubric. The Utah State Board of Education Adult Education leadership will review the applications and determine awards.

Programs not funded will have the opportunity to appeal the Utah State Board of Education's decision through the appeal hearing. Following the hearing an applicant may appeal to the Secretary of Education (defined in 34 CFR 76-401) for a final decision.

Programs will compete for WIOA AEFLA awards to provide instruction to English Language Learners (ELL) for non-native speakers (note: the scope of ELL services will be increased to include basic English literacy as well as instruction and guidance that leads the ELL student to attain a high school diploma or its equivalent and transition to post-secondary and training programs or employment), Adult Basic Education (ABE) literacy services, and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) services to qualified individuals as defined in Title II of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. All programs are expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework. Instruction provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on career opportunities defined within the regions. Funded programs will be expected to:

- Define how workforce preparation is incorporated within their curriculum;
- Define the strategies utilized to actively collaborate and transition adult education students to post-secondary and career training programs or to employment that will lead to a meaningful and self-sustaining career; and
- Ensure that students are afforded career pathways and appropriate services through collaboration and coordination of referrals between Department of Workforce Services and rehabilitation service providers.

In addition to the above, Utah will make available funds to concurrently blend adult education and literacy activities into strong partnerships with the other partners through increasing the integration of instruction into regional high demand occupations that are identified by the Department of Workforce Services. As appropriate, programs will partner directly with their local training or post-secondary

institution to encourage student transition through the use of transition coaches or counselors. Applicants that are funded are expected to infuse Utah's College and Career Readiness Standards into instruction.

For the ELL population, a strong emphasis on English literacy and civics instruction will include concurrent and contextualized workforce preparation activities in combination with support from Department of Workforce Services to ensure successful integrated education and training offerings that may be available through Title I funding. Additionally, the application process will give greater emphasis and awarding of funds (funding rubric) to programs who define how they will infuse English language acquisition, basic education or high school completion into career pathway implementation by direct partnerships with Department of Workforce Services and Vocational Rehabilitation to deliver instruction concurrently in partnership with local employers) or in a pilot location that involves one or more partner programs focused on providing family literacy or workplace learning to improve parent English or basic literacy skills through educational partnerships. If an applicant applies for funding to provide Family Literacy they would be expected to not work in isolation but to work in partnership with a local Head Start or early education partnership in addition to the Department of Workforce Services ensuring that the adults are able to meet their educational and employment needs.

Funded applicants can no longer offer services that are splintered and in silos but rather services must be infused in a career pathway defined for each student. Applicants may also receive priority points for creating contextualized training opportunities for adult education students in high demand industries within their region and defining how they will provide adult education services (basic skills, ELL and civics education and high school completion services, workforce preparation activities) meeting the needs of the employer and the local community to increase the skill levels of each employee.

#### c. Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- Adult education and literacy activities;
- Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- Secondary school credit;
- Integrated education and training;
- Career pathways;
- Concurrent enrollment;
- Peer tutoring; and
- Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional

institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

Utah will establish and operate programs under Section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals. Priority of service will be given to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participating in the program. Funds (a minimum of 10 percent of the allowable 82.5 percent) will be competed for funding opportunities.

Eligible providers of demonstrated effectiveness will have direct and equitable access to apply for Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals grants to provide educational services in correctional facilities, county jails or other institutional settings. Utah will compete the funds using the same grant application and application process being used for section 231 funds. Adult Education AEFLA funds will be competed based on an application process following the 13 guidance points outlined in section 231(e). Grant awards will be awarded on the basis of application merit as measured on a Utah State Board of Education defined scoring rubric. The final decision will rest with the Utah State Board of Education Adult Education leadership. Applicants will be funded based on the focus of grant applications defining the program's ability to meet the needs of the adult learner 16 years of age or older by providing literacy activities, including adult education (including high-school completion), basic literacy, special education services to qualified youth, integration of English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation or integrated education and training.

Programs awarded funds will be expected to infuse civics education within the context of offered coursework. Applicants applying for funding must define how funding will be used to meet the educational needs of offenders who are within five years of leaving an institution. Awarded funds are to be used to increase the number of incarcerated adults improving their basic skills, completing a secondary school credential, entering post-secondary education and training, or entering or retaining employment. Educational services offered may be provided by peer tutors who work under the direction of an adult educator. Instructions provided should be contextualized and designed to focus on the transition of reentering society. Programs will be expected to define how provided educational services will improve the offender's likelihood of successful reentry. This may include partnerships with post-secondary or training institutions so that they are co-teaching industry trades or certification programs within the facilities that Department of Workforce Services defines as marketable once the offender paroled; and how adult education will partner with Corrections ensuring the offender has a defined career pathway and resources once paroled.

Adult Education corrections programs applicants awarded funding shall actively engage with Department of Corrections staff and programming officers to ensure offenders who have been or are involved in education and are scheduled for release are actively engaged in transition services at release and at post-release. Adult Education correction program staff members are expected to partner with the Department of Corrections, Department of Workforce Services and Vocational Rehabilitation in transition and release processes designed to reduce offender recidivism.

#### **d. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**

Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, including how the Integrated

English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities.

Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program and how the funds will be used for the program.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Describe how the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Utah is requiring all eligible providers for sections 225, 231 and 243 to follow the same grant application process. Doing so ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants. This process also ensures that the same grant announcement, application, and grant process is used by all potential applicants. The Adult Education programs awarded funds by Utah will be expected to serve qualified students by:

- Incorporating an understanding of the American system of government, freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship within ELL curriculum and instruction;
- Preparing qualified ELL students to transition to employment and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through partnerships with Department of Workforce Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and post-secondary and training programs;
- Providing ELL services that include general career-readiness instruction related to employment and occupations; and
- Defining processes that will be implemented with partner agencies (Department of Workforce Services and Rehabilitation) to ensure that integrated education is focused on high-demand industry needs in the local economic area.

Utah will fund an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program in accordance with the requirements of Title II, subtitle C. Funds for this program will be awarded to qualified adult education ELL providers based on sub-state data supporting the most at-risk populations of ELL persons and the high-demand industry needs within the areas.

Utah will deliver the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program in combination with Integrated Education and Training activities (IET). It will be delivered as an instructional component in partnership with IET activities reinforcing the content of English literacy and civics classes, which include the history and structure of the U.S. government (i.e., the executive, legislative and judicial branches), the geographical history and current geopolitical structure of the country, the roles and responsibilities of the president, the responsibilities of the White House, the U.S. legal and education systems, and how these roles and rights are carried out in the workplace and the community. These curriculum components are designed to guide students in becoming knowledgeable citizens and active community members.

English literacy and civics classes introduce students to civics-related content by providing them with opportunities to apply that knowledge in their daily work lives while building their English language and literacy skills. As English language learners gain confidence as language learners and as citizens with rights and responsibilities associated with success in the workplace and in-demand industries, they will achieve personal and professional growth and successes within the communities. Adult Education programs providing ELL services will refer qualified adult education students to the Department of Workforce Services and Office of Rehabilitation for necessary services. Department of Workforce Services and Office of Rehabilitation will reciprocate by referring potential students to Adult Education. Again, the intent of the English literacy and civics program will be not only to teach English to non-native speakers, assisting them in understanding civic rights and responsibilities, but also to work with partner agencies to place the learners in employment settings leading to self-sufficiency.

## e. State Leadership

### 1. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA

The Utah State Board of Education will utilize 12.5 percent of the AEFLA allocation for state leadership activities to:

- Investigate positive practices for improving teacher quality and retention;
- Develop content and models for IET career pathways; and
- Work with programs and partners to integrate literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers.

(A) By aligning Adult Education and literacy activities with core programs, the Utah State Board of Education Adult Education Services will implement the strategy in WIOA Section 102, including developing career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. Activities that support this alignment include:

- State and local area trainings with partner agencies where staff have the opportunity to interact and set the framework for partnerships, discussions and action in meeting the education and employment needs of customers;
- Providing curriculum to programs to support student instruction in high demand career pathways;
- Providing technical support to programs providing Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs;
- Providing additional support to enable the presence of Career Navigators or similar positions in each program;
- Funded activities for programs to support the implementation of College and Career Readiness Standards and English Language Proficiency Standards;
- Monitoring programs for alignment of Adult Education secondary graduation standards with the Utah Core Standards in the areas of math, English and OCTAE College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards; and

- Providing Adult Education program staff with trainings on components of <https://jobs.utah.gov> and <https://www.ktsutah.org/> with an emphasis on:
  - Career pathways, including but not limited to an understanding of occupational outlook, education requirements and wages in Utah
  - Post-secondary and technical training opportunities supporting in-demand occupations

(B) The Utah State Board of Education - Adult Education Services will develop high-quality professional development opportunities to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231 (b). This will include instruction on the essential components of reading adapted to the specific needs of adult learners. Instruction may be provided by volunteers or by paid staff and will include disseminating information about models and promising practices related to such programs. Programs are encouraged to allocate portions of their budgets (both state and AEFLA funds) to pay for staff to attend state-sponsored adult education training. Programs releasing staff for training will define what their expectations are as a result of training and how they will implement and maintain the training learned. State staff will:

- Assess the needs of local programs;
- Continue to utilize LINCS, COABE, ProLiteracy, and other literacy entities as providers for training;
- Utilize local program staff as trainers;
- Host or co-host a fall conference focused on the adult teacher and learner; and
- Disseminate information about models and promising practices.

Program-specific professional development examples include:

- Training opportunities with four emphases: ELL, reading, math, and career pathways with career-infused curricula;
- Adult Education training utilizing both national and state trainers;
- Training utilizing delivery options such as web meetings, self-paced online training, and in-person training;
- Student Information System (SIS) (UTopia) training;
- Ongoing data training and program monitoring with program directors, analyzing data, outcomes and implications for changes in academic programming at the local level with an emphasis on meeting state and federal targets;
- BEST Literacy and BEST Plus training for new staff as needed;
- BEST Plus recalibration training;
- NRS Training;
- TABE and CASAS assessment training;

- Onboarding and additional professional learning opportunities for new Program Directors;
- Training with partners to ensure that mentors/counselors understand referral processes and all available resources, including post-secondary and career training programs; and .
- Other professional development as necessary.

(C)(i) Eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funding under title (3)(i) have a provision for technical assistance. This involves developing and disseminating instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available and appropriate in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training.

Instructional coaches will be used to disseminate instructional practices statewide based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available. The instructional coaches will provide support in instructional practices rooted in andragogy and contextualization.

Data is monitored regularly and is used along with needs assessments to identify program needs. Targeted technical assistance activities are provided surrounding the following areas:

- Integrated Education and Training (IET)
- Corrections education
- Evidence-based instruction in the essential components of reading
- Standards based instruction

(C)(ii) The role of eligible providers as one-stop partners is to provide access to employment, education and training services. Each Adult Education program will define its role with its partners and how they will meet on an ongoing basis and discuss common topics. Topics include, but are not limited to, services provided, access to services, employment trends and employment opportunities available for the common client. This can be accomplished through attending quarterly area advisory partnership meetings with representatives from core and required partners. At the meeting, members will share information about existing employment partnerships and emerging employment opportunities within the local economic areas. Members may also present information such as workforce development strategies that will be developed during a program year and how employment opportunities will be extended to adult education students.

(C)(iii) Eligible providers will receive assistance in using technology, including for staff training and especially for improving system efficiencies.

- Program directors will utilize electronic desk monitoring tools and reports to improve program performance and state outcomes.
- Programs will define how they incorporate technology into their classroom in order to increase the amount and quality of learning related to increased performance. Student outcomes will be evaluated by the Utah State Board of Education based on data in UTopia.
- Programs will define weaknesses and areas where state support is needed to advance their programming options to increase both efficiency and student outcomes.
- Professional learning activities will be provided based on increasing the use of technology in instruction.

- A remote learning program specialist will provide technical assistance focused specifically on increasing the amount and quality of learning through technology.

(D) Programs will monitor and evaluate the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities as well as the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the state.

- Programs are reviewed at a minimum of every three years. A risk assessment is used to evaluate programs using a variety of metrics. Programs identified through the assessment as high risk are monitored more frequently.
- Each program is assigned a technical assistant (TA) and has regular desk monitoring conversations with their technical assistant. These conversations help identify proven or promising practices within the state and then are disseminated through Directors' Meetings and other professional learning activities.
- State staff run program reports on a monthly basis and identify programs with additional technical assistant or monitoring needs.
- Funds are used to create and maintain a Student Information System (SIS) that allows for continued monitoring of data .

## 2. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable

Funds will be used to support activities surrounding the implementation of statewide broadcast courses and the expansion of remote learning within the state.

Funds will also be used to provide a text-based communication tool for outreach to instructors and students.

### f. Assessing Quality

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

MSG levels will be monitored including academic outcomes (education-gained advancement and high-school completion) through monthly data monitoring with program directors to ensure the entry of quality and timely data into UTopia.

- State specialists will utilize state policy, reports, compliance monitoring as well as monthly desk monitoring to ensure compliance of quality Adult Education services and data. Examples include monitoring appropriate testing and testing standards, or monitoring intensity and duration of programs and impact on outcomes.
- Programs will define what programmatic changes they will make to improve their program outcomes.
- Corrective action will be taken with programs as needed to ensure their compliance with Utah State Board of Education's expectations, with Adult Education Services leading toward defined outcomes.



In addition to the above, Utah will use State Leadership funds as needed to cross train adult education staff to better align services between partners including common referral processes and intake processes. Utah supports statewide professional development. A directors' leadership steering team meets as needed to assist the Utah State Board of Education in identifying PD needs. Funded programs also have an annual opportunity to identify specific needs that are taken into consideration by the Utah State Board of Education. Decisions are based on data as well as WIOA rules in identifying and setting PD priorities.

State leadership funds will be used to focus on a variety of areas including CCR implementation, establishing bridge programs, evidenced based ELL practices, effective program management, integrated education and training as well as transition to post-secondary opportunities. The Utah State Board of Education will deliver technical assistance to enhance program effectiveness through program desk monitoring, program visits and the development and delivery of data reports designed to assist program directors and staff to improve student outcomes. PD and technical assistance delivery options include: in person, web, and online ensuring that all providers are afforded information needed to develop, maintain and improve services for the adult learner.

The Utah State Board of Education with involvement of the state directors' leadership team, will develop and disseminate teacher academy standards, initiate pilot curricula options for English language learners focused on career development and infusing CCR standards in curriculum. Utah assesses the quality of professional development in a variety of ways.

The state utilizes input from programs contained in annual program plans , desk monitoring conversations, direct program data, and program reviews to prioritize gaps that necessitate additional professional development. In addition to the direction and input from the directors' leadership steering team the needs assessments drive the creation of an annual training plan. Participants of all workshops, conferences, presentations and web meetings will be surveyed to evaluate and provide feedback on the quality and content of the professional development event. This feedback will be used to improve future PD opportunities.

## Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

The State Plan must include	Include
1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan;	Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program;	Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan;	Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law;	Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan;	Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan;	Yes

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| 7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and | Yes |
| 8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program;                    | Yes |

## Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| The State Plan must include  | Include |
| 1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement);  | Yes     |
| 2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA;  | Yes     |
| 3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA; | Yes     |
| 4. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.  | Yes     |
| 5. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303).  | Yes     |

## Authorizing or Certifying Representative

### CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

#### Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an

officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

#### Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Please download and sign the forms below. Please scan and return the forms to [wioa@ed.gov](mailto:wioa@ed.gov) at the same time you submit your State Plan via the portal.

1. SF424B - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
2. Grants.gov - Certification Regarding Lobbying  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)
3. SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (required, only if applicable)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>)

#### APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

Enter information in this column

Applicant's Organization

Utah State Board of Education

#### PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Enter information in this column

First Name

Stephanie

Last Name

Patton

Title

State Adult Education Director

## **Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)**

In the text box below, describe the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs provide the information to meet the requirements of Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), consistent with the following instructions posted at <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/gepa427.doc>.

In the disposition of all duties, the Utah State Board of Education recognizes the need to ensure access and participation in all programs for all students, teachers and other program beneficiaries with special needs. With this recognition comes the responsibility to ensure that each sub-recipient operates in a like manner. To this end, the Utah State Board of Education will:

1. Ensure to the fullest extent possible equitable access to, participation in, and appropriate educational opportunities for all staff and students with special needs. The Utah State Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, military status, veteran status, or any other status or classification protected by federal, state or local law in its education programs and community outreach activities. It provides reasonable and appropriate accommodations in response to the needs of its students, staff, community members and other participants.
2. Ensure that all sub-recipients communicate a similar message for all Federally-assisted programs.

## **Adult Education and Literacy Program Performance Indicators**

### **Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021.

However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	30.0%		30.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	30.0%		30.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	2700.0		2700.0	
Credential Attainment Rate	2.5%		2.5%	
Measurable Skill Gains	52.0%		52.0%	
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## **Program-Specific Requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (Combined or General)**

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan [13] must include the following descriptions and estimates, as required by section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA:

---

[13] Sec. 102(b)(2)(D)(iii) of WIOA

### **a. Input of State Rehabilitation Council**

All agencies, except for those that are independent consumer-controlled commissions, must describe the following:

1. Input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including input and recommendations on the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, recommendations from the Council's report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other Council reports that may have been developed as part of the Council's functions;

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17. The designated state unit jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to and reviews annually state goals and priorities and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and the Unified State Plan.

The State Rehabilitation Council meets 10 times per year. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5) the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and transmits to the council:

- All plans, reports and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner
- All policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement
- Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential
- In January of 2020 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided an overview of the Unified State Plan and submitted the proposed final Goals and Priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program to the State Rehabilitation Council for review, discussion and input. Over the last two years the council was provided with regular updates on the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's progress with the established goals and priorities.

2. The designated State unit's response to the Council's input and recommendations; and

In addition to the review, analysis, and recommendations covered above, the State Rehabilitation Council made recommendations covered in the Vocational Rehabilitation portion of the Unified State Plan, and as required by section 101 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1983, as amended by the WIOA.

The following is a summary of the State Rehabilitation Council's recommendations and the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's response and actions taken with regard to these October 2019-September 2021 recommendations:

**State Rehabilitation Council RECOMMENDATION 1:** At the November 2019 meeting, Assistant Director Aaron Thompson presented to the State Rehabilitation Council on performance data, including targets for the coming year. He discussed the Order of Selection monthly releases, national and Utah performance measures, median earnings of clients, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Monitoring Report recommendations. Thompson discussed the 2020 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified State Plan goals (in development) that would be ready to present to the State Rehabilitation Council for review at the January 2020 meeting. The Council requested a copy of those goals for review at the January 2020 meeting.

**Utah State Office of Rehabilitation RESPONSE 1:** At the January 2020 meeting, Thompson presented on both the past and current goals and activities under the Unified State Plan in support of WIOA. The Council unanimously supported the goals as presented.

**State Rehabilitation Council RECOMMENDATION 2:** At the November 2019 meeting, the State Rehabilitation Council Executive Council asked for a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) services update regarding changes to new policy, including high quality indicators for performance and counselor approval levels.

**Utah State Office of Rehabilitation RESPONSE 2:** At the November 2019 meeting, Transition and Supported Employment Specialist Aimee Langone presented on the changes affecting Community Rehabilitation Program services, as requested. Langone also discussed Job Coach training and the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) certification, as well as fee schedule changes and communication/collaboration between Community Rehabilitation Program providers, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, and clients. A PowerPoint presentation was distributed to State Rehabilitation Council members. The State Rehabilitation Council unanimously supported the recommended changes to policy.

**State Rehabilitation Council RECOMMENDATION 3:** At the October 2020 meeting, a survey was discussed for Council input on the types of provider and/or DWS program presentations the Council would like for the coming year. Topics with the greatest interest could then be reviewed, staff identified, and/or programs contacted and scheduled for future Council meetings. Administrative liaison staff were tasked with getting the survey forwarded to Council members for discussion at the November meeting.

**Utah State Office of Rehabilitation RESPONSE 3:** At the November 2020 meeting, Assistant Director Aaron Thompson reviewed the survey results for upcoming Council meetings. The partner program presentations requested included: the Disability Law Center; Utah Developmental Disability Council; the Utah Parent Center; Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities (DSPD); Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH), and community rehabilitation programs. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation internal program requests included: Business Relations and Choose to Work; Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH); Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (BVI) and Ticket to Work. General topics of interest were: Employment First, WIOA: VR 101 topics: Interpreter Services; Client Success Stories; Credentialing; and Vocational Rehabilitation Fee-for Service Rate Structure, among others.



Several of these requested presentations (community partner and Vocational Rehabilitation program-specific) were included in the next several Council meetings.

State Rehabilitation Council RECOMMENDATION 4: At the April 2021 meeting, Assistant Director Thompson gave a brief overview of the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account, a tax advantage savings account for people with disabilities. Council members requested that a more comprehensive presentation be made on the ABLE roll-out in Utah and its impact on clients of the Vocational Rehabilitation and other partner programs.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation RESPONSE 4: At the May 2021 meeting, an ABLE accounts presentation was made by the Ohio STABLE program, and Council members were able to ask a series of questions regarding roll-out of the program in Utah. At the September 2021 meeting, the Utah Work Incentive Planning Services (UWIPS) director Jolene Wyler gave an update on the ABLE.ut.com website, the available resources and rack cards, and reported that ABLE was open for applications.

### 3. The designated State unit's explanations for rejecting any of the Council's input or recommendations.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation did not reject any input or recommendations from the State Rehabilitation Council.

## b. Request for Waiver of Statewideness

When requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement, the designated State unit must identify the types of services to be provided by the program on a non-statewide basis. The waiver request must also include written assurances that:

### 1. A local public agency will provide the non-Federal share of costs associated with the services to be provided in accordance with the waiver request;

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is not requesting a Waiver for Statewideness.

### 2. The designated State unit will approve each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is not requesting a Waiver for Statewideness.

### 3. Requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan will apply to the services approved under the waiver.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is not requesting a Waiver for Statewideness.

## c. Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Development System

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce development system with respect to:

**1. Federal, State, and local agencies and programs;**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has developed and maintains cooperative agreements where necessary with federal and state agencies not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains cooperative agreements with the Utah State Board of Education and the Utah Department of Human Services (DHS). As required by Utah State legislation, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has developed a MOU and coordinated plan with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to carry out services related to employment for persons with significant disabilities. Additional agreements exist relevant to the "Employment First" initiatives in Utah. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also maintains cooperative agreements with the Utah State Board of Education and the Veterans Administration (VA).

**2. State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998;**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has a collaborative relationship with the Utah Assistive Technology Program (UATP), which is a state program carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. UATP provides assistive technology devices and services to Utahns with disabilities, in addition to providing training to individuals with disabilities, families and professional service providers. Through Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's Utah Center for Assistive Technology (Utah System of Higher Education) office, UATP operates a program that provides refurbished mobility devices and equipment to low-income individuals with disabilities. In addition, specific to the provision of assistive technology services, Utah System of Higher Education serves as a statewide resource for information and technical services for people with disabilities for assistance with acquiring and using assistive technology devices. Another assistive technology resource within Utah System of Higher Education is the Utah Assistive Technology Team which provides assistance to adults and youth with disabilities by providing introductory training and support on computer technology that can enhance education and employment. This includes free consultations, workshops, and information and referral services and augmentative communication device loaner programs for students with disabilities in public schools.

**3. Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture;**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains a cooperative agreement with "AgrAbility", a program carried out under the authority of the Undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture which includes a fee for service arrangement to support farmers and ranchers with disabilities.

**4. Non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth; and**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has several cooperative agreements and collaborates with agencies that serve out-of-school youth. These partners include the Division of Services for People with Disabilities, the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Community Rehabilitation Programs, the Division of Juvenile Justice and local mental health agencies. Statewide, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has assigned liaisons who facilitate interagency referrals, outreach and information and coordination of services to meet the needs of out-of-school youth.

## **5. State use contracting programs.**

The State Use Program serves to create employment opportunities and to enhance independence of people with disabilities by having departments of state government purchase commodities and services from qualified community rehabilitation programs (CRPs). Utah State law sets aside funding for contracts to be awarded to CRPs. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Assistant Director serves as a member of the "Purchasing from People with Disabilities Advisory Board," which implements the State Use Program.

## **d. Coordination with Education Officials**

Describe:

1. The designated State unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of VR services, including pre-employment transition services, as well as procedures for the timely development and approval of individualized plans for employment for the students

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has long established plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities to employment and independence. Each year the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation co-hosts a joint training with the Utah State Board of Education for teams to enhance collaboration between the two parties on transition and pre-employment transition services. Teams will strategize on how to coordinate the student's Individualized Education Program and Individualized Plan for Employment to assist students to prepare for a smooth transition from school to post school outcomes. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains policy and procedures to ensure that eligible students with disabilities develop an Individual Plan for Employment prior to exiting high school.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Board of Education have a signed Interagency Agreement which outlines the plans to coordinate between agencies at the state and local levels to ensure smooth transition from school to work for students with disabilities in Utah. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Utah State Board of Education attend the annual National Transition Institute sponsored by the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition to develop state goals and strategies to improve student transition from school to employment. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Utah State Board of Education partner to offer an annual State Transition Institute to foster goal setting at the local level.

2. Information on the formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency with respect to:

**A. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains a state-level interagency agreement with Utah State Board of Education which governs collaboration with school districts and public charter schools who serve secondary education students. The interagency agreement includes provisions for consultation, technical assistance, professional development, Vocational Rehabilitation referrals and eligibility, and individualized goals of the local teams. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has assigned Transition Counselors to each local school district and charter school. The counselors meet with special educators and administrators, provide outreach to students and parents, provide Vocational Rehabilitation Welcome Sessions to students, provide Job Readiness Workshops to students, attend IEP meetings, as well as cover all referrals and questions from that school.

The interagency agreement with the Utah State Board of Education also provides guidance and clarification of expectations as set forth by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), defines terms, and delineates financial responsibilities. It describes consultation and technical assistance available to assist the Utah State Board of Education and local districts in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services and pre-employment transition services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

**B. Transition planning by personnel of the designated State agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and implementation of their individualized education programs;**

The interagency agreement provides for joint transition planning coordination by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Board of Education for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs (IEPs) under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and specifies the roles and responsibilities of each agency. It includes provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services and describes procedures developed for outreach to students with disabilities during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services. A representative of Utah State Board of Education Special Education sits on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), and a representative from Utah State Office of Rehabilitation sits on the Utah Special Education Advisory Panel (USEAP) providing consultation and assistance. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Board of Education develop statewide goals to improve transition services each year through attending the Capacity Building Institute sponsored by the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT).

**C. Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;**

A statewide interagency agreement with the Utah State Board of Education program was modified in March 2018 to provide guidance and clarify expectations on both sides. The Utah State Board of Education agrees to ensure that all children ages 3 through 21 with disabilities are provided free and appropriate public education (FAPE) under IDEA. Utah State Board of Education has responsibility

for educating transition youth between age 14 and school exit through graduation, reaching maximum age, or no longer IDEA-eligible. Under IDEA Utah State Board of Education will provide education and activities focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student, to facilitate movement from the school to post school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, counseling and guidance, integrated employment (including supported employment), adult services, independent living or community participation. Utah State Board of Education is also responsible for funding transportation and developmental, corrective, and other supportive services including speech-language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation (including therapeutic recreation), social work services, counseling services (including rehabilitation counseling), orientation and mobility services and medical services (for diagnostic or evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in students.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with a disability, including students and youth with disabilities, to prepare for, secure, retain or regain an employment outcome that is consistent with his or her strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. In addition Vocational Rehabilitation is responsible for providing Transition Services to eligible students and youth with disabilities as they transition from school to adult life. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will coordinate with Utah State Board of Education to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to Students who are eligible and potentially eligible for services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation coordinates with Utah State Board of Education at the state and local level to ensure that transition services, to include pre-employment transition services, provided by each entity are complementary and non-duplicative. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Utah State Board of Education agree to collaborate on financial responsibility of services, within the guidelines of the Rehabilitation Act and IDEA. Both agencies will respect the resources set forth by the policies and procedures that guide each agency's services. When a student with a disability is both in school and has an IPE with Vocational Rehabilitation, the cost of services necessary for both education and for the student to become employed, will be negotiated between the LEA representative and the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, pending any necessary approval through LEA administration and Utah State Office of Rehabilitation chain of command. At any time during the transition process, comparable benefits or additional agency representatives will be included in the IEP/IPE transition team as an additional resource for financial responsibility. Agreements on shared cost of required services for the student/client, will be in writing in the IEP and IPE, to ensure collaboration and understanding of agency involvement. Utah State Board of Education and Utah State Office of Rehabilitation are separately responsible for recruiting, hiring, training and retaining qualified personnel responsible for transition services and the coordination of transition services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's staffing policy and practices comply with CSPD standards and state licensing requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. Utah State Board of Education maintains a separate staffing policy that adheres to state educator and para-educator licensing and credential requirements.

#### **D. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation collaborates with school personnel to identify students who may have a disability and need transition services. This includes special education teachers,

administrators, 504 coordinators, school counselors, school nurses, community non-profit organizations, the Utah Parent Center and a variety of other entities to provide outreach and identification of students in need of Vocational Rehabilitation transition services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is represented on local school district transition councils, the statewide transition council, and the Utah Futures Advisory Committee which bridges collaborative efforts between the Utah State Board of Education, the Workforce Development Division, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, GOED, and Higher Education. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has a Transition Coordinator and a Pre-Employment Transition Service Program Specialist who are responsible for improving the quality and consistency of transition services from Utah State Office of Rehabilitation counselors to students and improving collaboration and coordination. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has also been working collaboratively with Utah State Board of Education and the Local Education Agencies at the state and local levels to coordinate pre-employment transition services to students who are eligible and potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services. In addition to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has Pre-ETS Instructor positions in each of the Vocational Rehabilitation District offices to provide Pre-ETS services and outreach/coordination activities to students.

#### **e. Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations**

Describe the manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit VR service providers.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing Vocational Rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established fee-for-service provider agreements with private and non-profit entities providing vocational rehabilitation services throughout Utah in accordance with the Unified State Plan. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains vendor relationships with other agencies providing Supported Job Based Training (SJBT), Supported Employment (SE) and Customized Employment (CE) services that include a fee-for-service agreement and participation in job coach training activities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to identify and make arrangements, where appropriate, to expand the availability of Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) offering supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of the state plan. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has an Employment Service Support Specialist who is responsible for maintaining the provider agreement, ensuring the providers meet the training qualifications, and monitoring provider performance.

#### **f. Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services**

Describe the designated State agency's efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other State agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide supported employment services and extended employment services, as applicable, to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established a policy chapter based on the provision of Supported Employment Services. The policy is a hybrid of milestone outcome payments and hourly rates to meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities. This policy chapter defines extended support agencies who qualify to provide supported employment supports as a partner with VR. These agencies include Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), Division of Services for Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) as well as local mental health agencies, employers, private organizations, natural supports and incentives offered through Social Security Ticket to Work, or Medicaid. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to identify and partner with other supported employment entities to provide clients with informed choices, options, and qualified service providers to meet their unique needs. These efforts are coordinated by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Supported Employment Coordinator and the Employment Support Services Program Specialist. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has agreements with local school districts, community rehabilitation programs, and Division of Services for People with Disabilities to provide Supported Employment services to individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD), including youth. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is a partner in Employment First legislation which makes employment the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities to ensure that supports are in place for individuals with intellectual disabilities, youth in post high programs, and all individuals who are MSD and need supported employment services, including customized employment. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities collaborate to provide supported employment services to individuals on the Division of Services for People with Disabilities waitlist through the provision of long term funding from the Utah State Legislature. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation contracts with Utah State University to provide training for Community Rehabilitation Program Provides in Workplace Supports (Job Coaching) and Customized Employment to assist with building capacity for Supported Employment in Utah.

## g. Coordination with Employers

Describe how the designated State unit will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities in order to facilitate the provision of:

### 1. VR Services; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has initiatives to partner with employers to identify competitive, integrated employment and career exploration opportunities that facilitate the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. These initiatives are primarily carried out through the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Business Relations, Choose to Work (CTW) Program and the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (GCEPD). Through coordinated efforts, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation strengthens the connection between employers and individuals with disabilities by providing outreach efforts, disability awareness training, consultation services, job fairs and workshops, business networking activities and job posting networks. Below are the key activities, services and initiatives:

- **Customized Services:** The Business Relations Team conduct outreach and meet with individual businesses to provide information and resources on hiring, disability awareness, recruitment strategies, hiring practices, retention programs, consulting, technical assistance and support, tax credits and other incentives, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),

reasonable accommodations, employment laws and other topics relating to disabilities and assistive technology.

- **Workshops, Job Fairs and Trainings:** The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation conducts semi-annual Employer Workshops on Hiring and Retaining Individuals with Disabilities and Career Preparation and Job Fairs. The Workshop offers business partners an opportunity to learn more about disability, accommodations and other disability and employment issues. The job fairs are targeted for individuals with disabilities in which business partners participate. These events provide opportunities for businesses to connect with job-ready individuals with disabilities, and individuals with disabilities to explore careers. The job fairs and workshops also offer opportunities for internships and mentor experiences. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also partners with the GCEPD to support a Utah affiliate of Disability:IN. This is a business to business mentoring model that provides employers with information, training and resources on disability inclusive workforce practices.
- **PWDNET:** Through the Department of Workforce Services' online job board, a customized option is available to assist employers in recruiting qualified applications with disabilities by adding the keyword of "PWDNET" into the recruitment. This allows job seekers with disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and employment specialists to search for job opportunities with employers who want to hire people with disabilities to meet their workforce needs. Business Relations also manages an email listserv of job postings shared by business partners and recruitment entities targeting individuals with disabilities.
- **Choose to Work (CTW):** The core services of the Choose to Work program are job development and job placement for individuals with disabilities. Choose to Work specialists coordinate with the Business Relations Team to organize and engage in employer workshops to increase awareness regarding the hiring and job retention of individuals with disabilities. The Specialists are active participants in local area Chambers of Commerce and sit on local and community boards in order to facilitate the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services leading to an employment outcome. Choose to Work Specialists are actively engaged with the DWS Workforce Development Specialists as well as Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Business Relations Team and affiliates to identify integrated employment opportunities for job seekers with disabilities.
- **Business Customized Training (BCT):** Business Relations has also worked to implement Business Customized Training, BCT, with specific business partners. Business Customized Training involves a negotiation of a specific training program and training length in partnership with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, a CRP of the business choice and the business partner. The designated CRP works directly inside the business partner location to provide training to clients. Clients that successfully complete the training program are then offered opportunities for employment with the partner business.
- **TAP:** The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation utilizes the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP), which is a platform developed by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and The National Employment Team (NET) in partnership with disABLEDperson, Inc. TAP connects a national talent pool of Vocational Rehabilitation clients looking for employment and a job posting system for employers looking to hire individuals with disabilities.



## 2. Transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Transition Services provide a variety of services to connect transition aged youth, including students with disabilities with employers. Vocational Rehabilitation coordinates with employers on an individualized basis to meet both the client's and employer's needs. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation utilizes the Business Relations and Choose to Work Programs to coordinate with employers in support of transition services, including pre-employment transition services, for students and youth with disabilities. The Business Relations Team and Pre-Employment Transition Specialist work closely with the Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities to develop and conduct Disability Mentoring Day Events for eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. Interested businesses host these events to offer information on their company and address topics of concern with the students with disabilities. The students have an opportunity to tour the company to see the types of job opportunities available in the business. Students with disabilities from local high schools are invited to attend these events with their teachers, advocates or parents.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to expand work based learning and job exploration opportunities for students and youth with disabilities. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation meets with employers to identify and/or develop internships, on-the-job training, mentoring experiences and temporary work experiences for students and youth with disabilities. Students and youth with disabilities are invited to participate in career preparation workshops and job fairs. The job fairs provide students with an opportunity to meet with hiring specialists to discuss employment opportunities. The Business Relations Team and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors provide school transition specialists and teachers with information packets to prepare students for these events. The packet provides information on how to dress for success, interviewing, resume building, and appropriate behavior when meeting with business partners. Students can attend workshops on topics such as, "Working in Government Professions, State and Federal Hiring Initiatives," "Employer Panel," "How to Dress on a Dime and Interview Success," and "Social Security and Working."

## h. Interagency Cooperation

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

### 1. The State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act;

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to collaborate with the Department of Health and Department of Human Services related to provision of services for individuals eligible for home and community-based waiver programs. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, The Department of Health's Division of Healthcare Financing (Medicaid), the Division of Services for People with Disabilities and Utah State Board of Education will coordinate efforts to provide information and referral resources to Utahns with disabilities interested in entering or reentering the workforce. The three aforementioned agencies will negotiate and allocate resources as necessary to support a comprehensive system of work support resources that will increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in Utah.

## 2. The State agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains a long standing cooperative agreement with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD), the state agency responsible for providing services for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and partners in Employment First (DSPD and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health) are developing an MOU to enhance collaboration between the state agencies. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities are partners in the Employment First legislative initiative in Utah (UT HB 240) which establishes competitive, integrated employment as the preferred option for Utahns with disabilities.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities collaborate to provide extended services to clients participating in supported employment services, including customized employment services. The Division of Services for People with Disabilities receives its extended support funding through Medicaid Waivers and the Utah State Legislature. This funding is ongoing and available to provide long term services for individuals who have utilized Vocational Rehabilitation supports, are eligible for the Division of Services for People with Disabilities Services, and need long term supported employment services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities coordinate to ensure successful transitions of mutual clients from ongoing services to extended services. The Division of Services for People with Disabilities currently has a waitlist for services and will provide services to those with the most critical needs first when funding is available. The Division of Services for People with Disabilities has a yearly allocation in their budget to provide extended services to clients who are on their waitlist.

## 3. The State agency responsible for providing mental health services.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) have a longstanding partnership and collaborative relationship to provide supported employment opportunities for individuals with primary diagnoses of severe and persistent mental illness. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, DSAMH, and DSPD are developing a new agreement that will further enhance the communication and cooperation between the partners.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation coordinates and collaborates with the Department of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to implement the Individual Placement and Supports (IPS). IPS is a Supported Employment model that is designed to meet the needs of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. To implement the IPS model, local mental health agencies receive employment support training from DSAMH and register as Community Rehabilitation Program providers with Utah State Office of Rehabilitation. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation clients who participate in the IPS model may receive funding from local mental health agencies and Medicaid for extended services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and DSAMH partner to ensure that providers of IPS services meet nationally established fidelity requirements.

## i. Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

Describe the designated State agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified State rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated State unit, including the following:

## 1. System on Personnel and Personnel Development

### A. Qualified Personnel Needs

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

i. The number of personnel who are employed by the State agency in the provision of VR services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has a strong commitment to employing and retaining an adequate workforce of qualified vocational rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains a data system for personnel needs, resources, and training. The data system is maintained by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Training Coordinator and provides annual analysis of qualified personnel needs and development. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also coordinates with the Utah Department of Human Resources Management (DHRM) staff to track and monitor information on employees including date of hire, official job classification, job functions, terminations and other information, such as office and district assignments. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also coordinates with its fiscal department to track and manage full-time equivalents (FTEs) assigned to the agency. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also utilizes its AWARE case management system to track staff information about positions to which employees are assigned.

The data system currently includes:

- 101 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors
- 26 Counseling Supervisors
- 10 District Directors
- 46 Office Support Staff
- 11 Rehabilitation Technicians
- 11 Pre-Employment Transition Instructors
- 3 Business Relations Specialists
- 9 Employment Specialists
- 8 Work Incentive Counseling Staff
- 8 Assistive Technology Staff
- 3 Field Service Directors

- 4 Program Coordinators
- 4 Program Specialists
- 2 Case Management System Staff
- 2 Assistant Division Directors
- 1 State Vocational Rehabilitation Director

Of the 238 positions within the Vocational Rehabilitation Program, 127 are rehabilitation counselors and counseling supervisors who provide the direct core, non-delegable Vocational Rehabilitation services to clients. During FFY-21, USOR served 16,114 individuals (applicant to eligible) with a counselor/client ratio of 1:126.

ii. The number of personnel currently needed by the State agency to provide VR services, broken down by personnel category; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation needs to maintain the number of staff defined in the preceding section of this plan (238 FTEs, which include 127 direct service counselors and counseling supervisors). The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to operate under an Order of Selection, as outlined in section (m), in order to provide services within its fiscal and staff capacity. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has opened two categories and continues to move clients off of the third category. Adding additional counseling staff depends on the continued trend with applicants, the total number of individuals served, the ability to maintain a reasonable counselor-to-client ratio and available funding.

iii. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the State agency to provide VR services in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's annual turnover rate is 18.0% the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates approximately 110 rehabilitation counselors and counseling supervisor vacancies over the next five years. It is estimated that at least 15 of these vacancies will be due to retirement; therefore the majority will be due to counselors leaving the agency and internal promotion into other positions. In addition, based on historical trends, five new District Directors are anticipated over the next five years, along with 32 office support staff and rehabilitation technicians.

## B. Personnel Development

Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

i. A list of the institutions of higher education in the State that are preparing VR professionals, by type of program;

Utah has one Master's Program in the field of Rehabilitation Counseling within the state located at Utah State University. The program also contains a very small doctoral program. The program

emphasizes degrees given through distance education and consists mostly of individuals already employed by public Vocational Rehabilitation agencies across the country. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Training Coordinator and Assistant Vocational Rehabilitation Directors regularly coordinate with Utah State University administrative faculty to ensure the program meets the current needs of counselors enrolled in the program.

ii. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

Due to the makeup of students only a small on-campus class, usually 5 or 6 students, are available each year to recruit as new hires for Utah State Office of Rehabilitation vacancies.

iii. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

## 2. Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated State unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation hiring officials participate in college and provider job fairs to share information regarding employment in the profession and to encourage applicants from qualified areas of study and/or work experience. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also builds relationships with out-of-state colleges. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation recruits to fill Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor positions throughout the year by participating in university and college career fairs and presenting to students in the Utah State University Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) program. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation regularly hosts internship opportunities for rehabilitation program students, and several graduates have been hired as counselors.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation works with the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) to increase the distribution of recruitment announcements nationwide. This includes utilization of professional social networking platforms, and outreach to other individuals working in the social service profession, including WIOA partners.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation staff are active in the state chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA). Utah State Office of Rehabilitation leverages its relationship with the NRA to recruit qualified professionals and develop the qualifications of agency staff through additional training, support, and career development. For example, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation supports Utah Rehabilitation Association (URA) conferences and monthly 'brown bag training seminars' that are presented to staff, co-sponsored by the URA. These efforts are designed to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including individuals from minority backgrounds and/or with disabilities.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation offers flexible schedules, an incentive program that gives administrative leave for above average performance and generous educational assistance. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides staff with a 10% Administrative Salary Increase (ASI) for master's degree attainment, and a 5% increase for CRC attainment. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation supports employees by providing reimbursement for costs related to obtaining and maintaining certification and licensure. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation focuses on internal promotion and career mobility opportunities to support the long-term career development of staff.

### 3. Personnel Standards

Describe the State agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards consistent with section 101(a)(7)(B) to ensure that designated State unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

A. Standards that are consistent with any national or State-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing VR services; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established hiring preferences, policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that Utah State Office of Rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel are prepared and trained. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) policy that ensures professionals providing services meet the requirement of master's level education, rehabilitation counselor certification and state licensure. This policy applies to all Rehabilitation Counselors, Counseling Supervisors, District Directors and Field Service Directors.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation CSPD standard requires employees meet one of the following criteria:

- Hold a Utah State Licensure in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling
- Meet the criteria to obtain a Utah State Licensure in Vocational Rehabilitation

Counseling which includes holding a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or related field as outlined in the Utah State licensing regulations; obtaining 4000 hours of supervised experience under a Licensed Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; and having taken and passed the CRC exam (national certification exam); Employees who hold a Master's degree in an approved counseling field will be considered to have met the CSPD if they have completed the required 4000 hours of supervised work under the supervision of an LVRC and have completed and passed the CRC national exam. CSPD status is tracked for counselors, supervising counselors, and district directors. In addition, the CSPD database contains information on various area directors, administrators and program specialists.

The CSPD plans also require new counselors to meet the standard within five years of their hire date. Counselors who do not meet CSPD upon hire and require additional graduate level education are expected to enroll in at least one graduate level class and apply for a graduate program during their probationary period (first 12 months of hire).

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation makes every effort to recruit and hire individuals who meet the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's CSPD standard and supports the training of existing employees who do not meet the CSPD standard. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation offers ongoing educational assistance for those needing additional education to meet the standard. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation offers a pay increase for counselors who obtain national certification (CRC).

All new counselors receive a notification indicating their current CSPD standing and the requirement they must meet within their first year of hire and subsequent five years to meet the standard. Supervisors track the progress of the employee and include the requirement to meet CSPD in the counselor's performance plan and evaluation.

Each new counselor hired must complete a Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Qualification of Personnel Standard form. For staff who meet the standard at the time of hire and those who will meet the standard within five years of hire with additional work experience and national certification (those hired with a Master's degree in an approved counseling field), no additional documentation is required except verification of passing the CRC exam and/or verification of state licensure. For counselors who need additional education to meet the standard, sections will be added to their performance plans under the heading of Professional Development. The Professional Development section must include a plan describing how the counselor will meet the standard, by obtaining the required Master's degree and National Certification, within five years of the date of hire. These plans are submitted to the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Training Coordinator with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Qualification of Personnel Standard form within 30 days of hire. Progress sufficient to meet the CSPD plan requirements will be monitored in each subsequent year. If an employee has not satisfactorily completed all activities outlined for the year of review, they will receive an unsatisfactory rating in the Professional Development section and be placed on corrective action. This plan will include goals and deadlines for remediating their lack of progress toward their CSPD Plans. If the corrective action is not successful, disciplinary action will result, which may include termination based upon non-compliance with Utah State Office of Rehabilitation agency policy.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation assists with partial funding for graduate level education for those hired without a Master's degree in a counseling field. A graduate degree specific to Rehabilitation Counseling is required and considered to be directly related to the job requirements of a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. The CACREP accredited program chosen must be eligible to grant an RSA scholarship to offset the costs of tuition, fees, and books. All employees attending these programs must apply for the RSA scholarship. In the rare instance where an approved graduate program has exhausted available scholarship monies for a given semester, employees will be eligible to request full reimbursement from the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation.

All requests for Utah State Office of Rehabilitation educational benefits will be considered contingent upon available funding, and employees will be notified of approval prior to enrollment for each semester. All related educational expenses and time required to complete any graduate program will be the responsibility of the employee.

While it is the intention of the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation to establish and maintain funding necessary to allow all employees to meet the CSPD requirements, exceptional and unforeseen circumstances may arise that prohibit such funding. Should funding become unavailable, the employee will be allowed an adjusted time frame to accomplish the standard when such funding becomes available.

Upon completion of a Master's degree, counselors will be promoted to the position of Rehabilitation Counselor II and will receive a 10% increase. Counseling staff who obtain the CRC certification will receive a 5% increase. Counselors must continue to maintain CRC certification or they will lose the salary increase. In addition, once a counselor obtains their CRC designation and has completed the required number of hours, he/she must meet the eligibility criteria to become an LVRC. To assist counselors in maintaining licensure and certification, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides training for continuing education credits. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also provides reimbursement for CRC and LVRC application and renewal.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation instituted a hiring preference to encourage hiring staff that already meet the CSPD standard:

- Individuals who hold the Utah State Licensure for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.
- Individuals who meet the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation CSPD standard but have not yet obtained state licensure.
- Individuals enrolled in a CORE/CACREP accredited program to obtain a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling.
- Individuals who hold a Master's degree in an approved counseling field as outlined in the state licensing law.
- Individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in a related social service field such as counseling, psychology, social work, etc. and who have three or more years of employment or vocational counseling experience.
- Individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in a related social service field with less than three years of counseling experience (are hired as a Rehabilitation Counselor Trainee).

Progress of the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation staff is collected and monitored through the data system. Staff employed as Rehabilitation Counselors, Counseling Supervisors, District Directors, and Field Service Directors must meet the CSPD standards and are tracked through this system.

B. The establishment and maintenance of education and experience requirements, in accordance with section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that the personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training and staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the DSU. Training and professional development targets necessary rehabilitation skills particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, rehabilitation technology, disability, and utilization of labor market information. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals within the DSU.

## 4. Staff Development



Describe the State agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that, consistent with section 101(a)(7)(C) of the Rehabilitation Act, all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

A. A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated State unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides for attendance at workshops, conferences, formal course work at institutions of higher education, as well as agency developed and conducted training sessions.

All new counselors participate in a training academy that provides in-person training, instruction and guidance on Vocational Rehabilitation policy, procedures and case management. New counselors also have an opportunity to learn about various support programs, community partners and resources. While working in their offices, new staff receive training, clinical supervision, administrative supervision, counseling skills instruction, and professional development from office leadership (Counseling Supervisor and District Director). New counselors also receive support through peer mentorship, case conceptualizations and staffing meetings.

New and existing staff receive regular training in the areas of counseling, informed choice, medical, psychological and vocational assessment, assistive technology, culturally sensitive practices, job placement and development, ethics, labor market, technology, as well as other topics relevant to Rehabilitation Counselors. Topics and content areas for training are identified through client record review findings, staff surveys, consumer satisfaction survey responses, program updates, local/national trends, system changes and leadership recommendations.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides monthly in-service training via the video conferencing system to offices throughout the state, as well as by webstreaming training content. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has consistently exceeded the required training hours required to maintain national certification and has also provided counselors with the training hours required to maintain state licensure this past year.

During FY-20 and FY-21 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided training in topics centered on intersectional identities for persons with disabilities. Training content included sessions such as Cultural Humility and LGBTQIA+, Multicultural Clinical Supervision in the 21st Century, ABC's of Cultural Competence for Rehabilitation Counselors, Cultural Diversity in Disability and Mental Health Services, and The Way Forward: Emerging Strategies for Crime Victims of Color Series (Series included Shaping the Future Culturally Specific Innovations, Shaping the Future of Healing Justice, Shaping the Future of Protective Structures, Shaping the Future of Organizations). The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to operate within a lens centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion that represents diverse client populations with disabilities for clinically sound training.

B. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination of significant knowledge from research and other sources to designated State unit professionals and paraprofessionals.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides for attendance at workshops, conferences, webinars, formal course work at institutions of higher education, as well as agency developed and conducted training sessions. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides monthly in-service training via high definition video conferencing to offices throughout Utah, as well as by web-streaming training content. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has consistently exceeded the required training hours required to maintain national certification and has also provided counselors with the training hours required to maintain state licensure this past year. Available training incorporates the dissemination of knowledge gained through research in rehabilitation. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation leadership, program specialists and other staff attend local and national conferences and receive training where research relevant to their areas of specialization is disseminated. The information obtained is used for the development of staff training, along with application for enhancement of policies, practices and programs. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also surveys staff on the training attended in order to obtain feedback on making improvements and identifying additional training needs.

## 5. Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated State unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in appropriate modes of communication with or in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation works to ensure the availability of personnel who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English-speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established hiring preferences for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors who have bilingual skills to meet the needs of eligible individuals with limited English speaking abilities. Additionally, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established a number of deaf and hard of hearing caseloads statewide that are staffed by professionals fluent in American Sign Language. Applicants are tested prior to selection for these positions and receive a pay increase for these skills. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides interpreting services through qualified staff members, through telephone and video relay services, and through outside staff services purchased per state contract. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also routinely provides materials in alternative formats, to meet the needs of individuals. This includes electronic, large print and braille.

## 6. Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

As appropriate, describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated State unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established procedures and activities to coordinate the comprehensive system of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These include maintaining the state interagency agreement between the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Utah State Board of Education (Utah State Board of Education) for the

systematic transition for Utah's youth with disabilities. This includes increasing awareness and knowledge of pre-employment transition services for eligibility and potentially eligible students. The agreement also defines how The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Utah State Board of Education collaborate together for cross training, technical assistance and local level partnership activities.

## **j. Statewide Assessment**

1. Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State, particularly the VR services needs of those:

A. With the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, in cooperation with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), conducts a comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the state of Utah. The assessment identifies needs and assesses the current Vocational Rehabilitation system's capacity to meet service needs. The most recent triennial Comprehensive State Needs Assessment (CSNA) was developed and completed in 2019. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will conduct its next assessment in 2022.

The focus areas of Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's 2019 CNSA included:

1. The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services;
2. The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
3. The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
4. The needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce development system;
5. The needs of youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including their needs for pre-employment transition services;
6. The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state;
7. The need to expand outreach, training and technical assistance to employers.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and State Rehabilitation Council worked in collaboration to analyze the results of the CSNA, review the findings and recommendations, and develop goals and strategies to inform on the state plans, and improve areas of service capacity gaps and unserved/underserved populations.

Additional data sources, along with information from other internal assessment used to address the CSNA information goals include:

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics
- U.S. Census, American Community Survey of Disability Characteristics

- Local labor market and economic data from the Department of Workforce Services
- The Utah State Board of Education
- Social Security Administration
- National Center for Education Statistics
- Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center
- Previous Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessments
- Annual Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Performance Reports
- Annual State Rehabilitation Council Reports
- Annual Utah State Workforce Development Board Reports
- Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Consumer Satisfaction Surveys
- Surveys of Vocational Rehabilitation applicants, eligible Vocational Rehabilitation clients, students with disabilities, parents of students with disabilities , community rehabilitation program providers, business partners and Vocational Rehabilitation program staff.
- Focus group for parents of students with disabilities

The review of disability population data on individuals with disabilities in Utah was compared to national information and to peer states. Utah compares favorably on disability prevalence information when compared to the U.S. or to peer comparison states. The prevalence of disability in Utah is lower than the national prevalence. There are greater levels of employment for individuals with disabilities in Utah than nationally and Utah has fewer individuals with disabilities receiving SSI or SSDI than nationally.

People with disabilities in Utah have lower median earnings than nationally but there are fewer individuals with disabilities in Utah living below poverty than the national average. The prevalence of Utah individuals with disabilities living in rural areas is less than that found nationally, though the U.S. overall has a higher rate of people living in rural areas. For students with a disability (students with an IEP), Utah compared to the nation has a similar percentage of students served but Utah students receive their education in more restrictive settings.

Key findings noted in the CSNA include:

1. As a state, Utah does well for its residents with disabilities. Our state data compares favorably to the U.S. and to our peer states.
2. Vocational rehabilitation appears to be meeting the needs of its clients.
  - a. The perceived needs of individuals who have received services is matched by the pattern of services these individuals received. The data suggest that individual needs are being met.
  - b. Individuals who receive services are satisfied with the services. We see uniformly high rates of satisfaction with services.

- c. Accommodations received by individuals suggest that the workplace needs of individuals are overall being met.
  - d. Differences in perceived needs for those who have received services and those awaiting services vary in some analyses. The reason for the differences is not known. The possible influence of receiving services may impact your perception of your original service needs. Plus, years have elapsed between the time when respondents completed this questionnaire and when they first entered services and this could impact responses.
3. Examination of different need categories suggests that service needs are appropriately met for severity of disability and type of disability.
- a. There are some patterns of workplace accommodations that warrant further investigation. The accommodations for youth compared to adults, for females compared to males, and for those of varied ethnicity raise issues that could be examined to ensure that the accommodations are appropriate and not influenced by other factors.
  - b. The examination of ethnicity/race and urbanicity are limited by small sample sizes. More focused investigation is needed to better understand the impact of these factors on services and job placements.
  - c. The repeatedly higher perceived needs for mental health and health related services in some analyses raises concern. The need for improved mental health services was also mentioned independently by CRP and Vocational Rehabilitation staff. We know nationally that individuals with disabilities have more problems accessing these health-related services. The role of vocational rehabilitation in accessing or referring to these services would be a useful activity.
4. The needs of students with disabilities are not being adequately met. Parents have limited knowledge of what services their children could receive and are frustrated by a system they perceive as not transparent in letting them know what services are available.
- a. Greater coordination with school districts would allow future evaluations of this issue to obtain more responses.
5. The surveys focused on systems issues identified concerns across partners about the functioning of partner agencies. There are conflicting perspectives about what agency is responsible for service problems between the CRPs and the Vocational Rehabilitation staff.

In addition, the primary needs and concerns of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those accessing supported employment services, include the willingness of employers to provide work-place accommodations, assistance with assistive technology, medical/health care coverage, education on how benefits might be impacted by employment, access to safe and reliable transportation, overcoming employer bias, and job coaching.

## B. Who are minorities;

An analysis comparing the responses of clients who indicated they were from racial and ethnic minorities with responses of non-minority consumers was conducted. Individuals who identified as racial or ethnic minorities expressed greater concerns in the areas of

- Lacking job and career exploration
- Searching for employment
- Being paid less than others in similar jobs
- Needing legal assistance
- Finding and paying for a place to live
- Lacking transportation
- Experiencing negative treatment due to ethnic background.

Using the administrative data on race and ethnicity from Utah State Office of Rehabilitation 911 data, the researchers divided the responses into two groups, White and Non-White (Minority). In the Non-White, Minority group were clients with racial categories of Black, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and Other, and the ethnic category of Hispanic or Latino.

### C. Who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program;

CSNA findings were analyzed to identify the greatest areas of nationwide need. The greatest area of need was within the area of unserved and underserved populations. Specifically identified as underserved were:

- Non-white, minority individuals (as noted in the previous section)
- Individuals living in rural areas, especially those needing job search assistance
- Individuals with a history of substance abuse
- Individuals with significant or long term mental health needs

Internal assessment also identified the need to improve services for individuals who are homeless and refugees. In addition, an analysis of 2018 U.S. Census and the FFY 911 Utah State Office of Rehabilitation 9-11 data identified Asian individuals as an underserved minority group. Asian Americans comprised 2.7% of the Utah population and only 0.7% of Utah State Office of Rehabilitation clients.

### D. Who have been served through other components of the statewide workforce development system; and

The need for enhanced collaboration between the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Workforce Development Division was identified in the CSNA. This includes improving communication between program staff, enhancing knowledge of services offered in order to better assist clients, and increasing disability awareness and knowledge for workforce development system staff. Co-location within employment centers to improve client access to services was also a noted suggestion from staff surveys.

E. Who are youth with disabilities and students with disabilities, including, as appropriate, their need for pre-employment transition services or other transition services.

Information was gathered through the Utah State Board of Education on the number of transition aged students with disabilities in the state of Utah. In School Year 2019 (August 2018- June 2019), Utah State Board of Education served 25,946 students with disabilities aged 14-22 on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and 7,420 students with disabilities on a 504 plan. This number does not reflect the number of students who may have a disability and are served on an Individualized Health Plan or who have an unidentified disability. These numbers only reflect the approximate number of students with a disability who are the age of applying for and receiving services from Vocational Rehabilitation while still under IDEA (ages 14 through 22) or being served on a 504 plan.

The number of students and youth with disabilities across the State of Utah justifies a great need for transition services from Vocational Rehabilitation. During FFY19, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Served 5909 youth with disabilities. Of those students, 2994 were students with disabilities who received pre-employment transition services. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation served 2353 students through Pre-ETs contracts who are potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

## 2. Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and

Through the CSNA, WINTAC facilitated provider and counselor focus groups and other internal assessments. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation identified the following primary areas of need for improving community rehabilitation programs and services:

- Increasing rate of successful client placements
- Increasing the quality of the employment outcomes obtained through CRPs
- Improving quality and frequency of communication between counselors and CRP providers
- Enhancing training and technical assistance for employment specialists and job coaches
- Improving consistent, accurate application of service policy and procedures
- Improving the quality and timeliness of client referral information
- Revising the fee-for-service, authorization and payment process
- Improving and expanding access to customized employment services

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation agrees with identified needs and areas for improvement. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is in the process of revising CRP policies, procedures and performance standards. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has added the position of the Employment Support Services Program Specialist to assist the Supported Employment Coordinator with improvement to community rehabilitation program services. Also, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has entered into a contract with Utah State University's Employment and Community

Integration Training and Technical Assistance Center in order to provide expanding training and support for CRPs.

### 3. Include an assessment of the needs of individuals with disabilities for transition career services and pre-employment transition services, and the extent to which such services are coordinated with transition services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Since the implementation of WIOA, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has greatly expanded transition and pre-employment transition services. However, through the CSNA and internal assessment, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation identified needs in improving transition services, including pre-employment transition services and those provided under IDEA. Specific needs that have been identified include:

- Improving training, outreach and collaboration with students, schools and parents
- Improving marketing of services and communication with students, families, and partners on services available
- Expanding the capacity for transition and pre-employment transition service opportunities provided by Vocational Rehabilitation staff as well as community partners through fee-for-service and contracts, particularly in rural areas and for students who are blind and visually impaired and/or deaf and hard of hearing
- Increasing career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for students including job fairs, job shadowing, and paid work experience

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is in the process of developing strategies to improve the needs identified in the CSNA. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is coordinating with Utah State Board of Education to develop a cross-training for educators and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to increase collaboration and awareness of the availability of resources. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is developing resources and platforms to improve outreach and communication with the transition community. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is looking at ways to expand capacity to provide the core pre-employment transition services, including career exploration and work-based learning, to students with disabilities in Utah.

## k. Annual Estimates

Describe:

### 1. The number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services

According to the Utah Department of Workforce Services there are 198,415 individuals with a disability in the State of Utah between the ages of 18 to 74 years old. This is in addition to the more than 40,000 students with disabilities, between the ages of 14 to 18 years old, as per data shared by the Utah State Office of Education. During FFY-21, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation served 16,114 eligible individuals. Based on the information available and post-pandemic community outreach efforts, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation hopes to increase the number of new applicants over the next two years.



## 2. The number of eligible individuals who will receive services under:

### A. The VR Program;

The following data are the numbers of individuals served for the past four years and estimates for federal fiscal years 2022 and 2023

FFY 18 - 16, 970  
FFY 19 - 17,724  
FFY 20 - 16,641  
FFY 21 - 16,114  
FFY 22 - 16,919  
FFY 23 - 17,725

Based on referral trends, post-pandemic outreach efforts and connecting potentially eligible students to the Vocational Rehabilitation program, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation anticipates serving additional clients annually over the next two program years. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates a case service cost of \$17,000,000 to provide Vocational Rehabilitation services to eligible clients.

### B. The Supported Employment Program; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation served 1,040 eligible clients through the Supported Employment Program in FFY 19. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates serving 1,071 in FFY-22 and 1,103 in FFY-23. The pandemic had an impact on employment for individuals in supported employment attributed to the concern for safety and contagion. However, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation intended to increase the number of SE clients through outreach efforts and potential applicants identified through career counseling, information and referral services provided to individuals employed at subminimum wage, who are now seeking competitive, integrated employment. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation expects to receive \$300,000 annually in Title VI Supported Employment Funds.

### C. Each priority category, if under an order of selection.

As defined in the Order of Selection section of this plan, the priority categories are:

- Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD)
- Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD)
- Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities (D)

Over the next program year the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates serving between 6,311 - 6, 611 individuals with the most significant disabilities; between 9,212 - 9651 individuals with significant disabilities; and between 1,395 - 1,462 of all other eligible individuals

## 3. The number of individuals who are eligible for VR services, but are not receiving such services due to an order of selection; and

In November 2015 of FFY 2016 Utah State Office of Rehabilitation opened Category 1 (MSD) and started to move eligible clients off of the Order of Selection wait list for services. By February 2016 of FFY 16, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation opened Category 2 (SD) and began moving clients off of the wait list until this category was fully opened in June 2017. The following month in July 2017 of FFY 17, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partially opened Category 3 (D) and started moving clients off of the waitlist. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation intends to continue placing eligible

individuals classified in Category 3 on the waitlist for services until it has the resources to fully open this category. During FFY 21 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation placed 567 individuals in Category 3 on the waitlist. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates 595 to 635 individuals will be on the waitlist at some point during FFY 22.

4. The cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

	<b>Eligible Individuals</b>	<b>Cost of Services for Eligible Individuals</b>
<b>Category 1 (MSD)</b>	6,311 - 6,611	\$6,341,000
<b>Category 2 (SD)</b>	9,212 - 9651	\$9,256,500
<b>Category 3 (D)</b>	1,395 - 1,462	\$1,402,500
<b>Totals</b>	16,918 - 17,725	\$17,000,000

## I. State Goals and Priorities

The designated State unit must:

1. Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the State VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and jointly agreed to any revisions

Each year, the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (Utah State Office of Rehabilitation) review, define and update vocational rehabilitation program goals and priorities. These goals and priorities are also related to both the most recent Statewide Comprehensive Assessment and other internal evaluations in coordination with the State Rehabilitation Council. In keeping with the Utah's WIOA Unified State Plan timeline, the review, establishment and joint agreement of goals and priorities occurred in the January 2020 meeting.

2. Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the VR and Supported Employment programs

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the State Rehabilitation Council developed and agreed to the following goals and priorities to be achieved over the four year period of the Unified State Plan:

- Improve the quality of services provided by CRPs. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will launch a project to improve the quality of services provided by CRP's including supported employment services. This project will include a reorganization of the fee-for-service structure to emphasize positive rehabilitation outcomes with higher wages and benefits. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Utah State University are developing training for CRPs that sets a minimum professional quality standard and offers follow up technical assistance. The final

chapter of the project will be ongoing performance management activities to measure individual CRP success and ensure accountability for client outcomes.

- Improve the quality and quantity of Supported Employment Services, including customized employment. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will revise the supported employment and customized employment policies. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will provide training and outreach to CRPs to address training needs of CRPs and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors in regards to supported and customized employment. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will revise the CRP agreements so that quality and quantity expectations are more clearly defined and incentivized.
- Improve client understanding of benefits and work incentives. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will create and disseminate a benefits planning tool for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and clients to utilize in counseling sessions. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will enhance Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor knowledge and understanding of work incentives and benefits planning resources. Increased resources and training will assist supported employment clients in understanding how their benefits may be impacted by work prior to securing competitive, integrated employment outcomes.

### 3. Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:

#### A. The most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation developed the goals and priorities based on the most recent Comprehensive Statewide Assessment, which was completed in 2019, along with other internal evaluations and input from the State Rehabilitation Council.

#### B. The State's performance under the performance accountability measures of section 116 of WIOA; and

The goals and priorities were developed to support the state's performance under Section 116 of WIOA. Specific emphasis was placed on improving opportunities to increase competitive employment outcomes, pre-employment transition services and coordinating services to employers. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has goals related to measurable skill gains based on the baseline performance numbers from the last two years. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has goals related to the remaining performance accountability measures and continues to collect baseline data for future goal setting.

#### C. Other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation regularly provides the State Rehabilitation Council with updates and information regarding the operation, performance and effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. This information is presented to provide effectiveness in evaluating the establishment of the state goals and priorities. Prior to submission and incorporation in the Unified State Plan, the goals and priorities outlined above were submitted to the State Rehabilitation Council for comment, review and recommendation.

## m. Order of Selection

Describe:

1. Whether the designated State unit will implement and order of selection. If so, describe:

A. The order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided VR services

In accordance with Section 101(a)(5)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the 2014 Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA), Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has designated that individuals with disabilities will receive vocational rehabilitation services in the following order of priority:

- Category 1: Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD)
- Category 2: Individuals with Significant Disabilities (SD)
- Category 3: Individuals with Disabilities (D)

Definitions:

- Individuals with Most Significant Disabilities: Has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits two or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; will require multiple (three or more) vocational rehabilitation services; and will receive those services for an extended period of time (at least six months).
- Individuals with Significant Disabilities: Has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; will require multiple (three or more) vocational rehabilitation services; and will receive those services for an extended period of time (at least six months).
- Individuals with Disabilities: Has a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; can benefit in terms of an employment outcome through the provision of vocational rehabilitation services; and will require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter, engage in or retain gainful employment.

Order of Selection Administrative Process

- When setting up the Order of Selection, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will take into consideration all eligible individuals and prioritize them individually.
- The Order of Selection will be implemented statewide with the same priority levels in all areas of the state.
- Prior to implementation, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will submit the Order of Selection plan for public review and comment. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will also

consult with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) regarding the decision to implement an Order of Selection and solicit input regarding the plan.

#### Order of Selection Implementation Procedures

- When the Designated State Director of Utah State Office of Rehabilitation invokes an Order of Selection to prioritize the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services, each eligible individual will be classified into one of the three priority categories. If necessary, further prioritization within a category will be done by application date.
- All applicants, including individuals in trial work exploration status and eligible without IPE status, shall be notified in writing of the Order of Selection and their subsequent priority classification. Included in the written notification will be their right to appeal the determination of their priority classification and the availability of the Client Assistance Program (CAP).
- Services necessary to determine eligibility, including services in extended evaluation, shall not be impacted by the Order of Selection.
- Individuals who are found to be eligible but whose priority category is closed at the time of eligibility determination shall be placed in Order of Selection Delayed Status.
- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will ensure eligible clients who are not assigned to an open Order of Selection category will have access to services provided under the Information and Referral System [Section 1010(a)(5)(D) of the Act]. Information and referral services include:
  - Providing Vocational Rehabilitation information and guidance to assist the individuals to achieve employment
  - Referring individuals appropriately to other federal and state programs, including the statewide workforce investment programs through the Department of Workforce Services, that are best suited to meet the individuals' specific employment needs
- Individuals in Order of Selection Delayed Status shall be contacted at least once in the first 90 days after being placed in deferred status and periodically monitored as long as they remain in that status if they request follow up. Contact and monitoring lists will be computer generated with minimal efforts required of staff. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will also maintain the individual's client records to include documentation on the nature and scope of any information and referral services provided.

#### Order of Selection: Change in Priority Levels

- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will open and close priority categories, so long as the order of the categories is maintained and the continuity of services to all individuals selected for its services is assured.
- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will use the individual's date of application to rank individuals within a priority category. This equitable and reasonable factor provides a method of selecting individuals from a waiting list when the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has enough resources to serve some, but not all, individuals in that priority category.

## B. The justification for the order

In FFY 15 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Designated State Director determined resources were not available to provide vocational rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals through the program year. Consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, the Director established restrictions regarding priority categories for selecting the order in which otherwise eligible individuals will be served.

On February 25, 2015, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation obtained approval from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to implement an Order of Selection (OOS), which went into effect on February 27, 2015, due to the lack of adequate financial and personnel resources to provide services to all eligible clients.

Factors contributing to this lack of adequate resources include:

- Limited state funds to match available federal Vocational Rehabilitation funds — the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is not in a position to accept reallocation dollars at levels from preceding years due to issues with state match requirements and legislative intent. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation experienced an increase in the number of referrals, applications and clients served. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation went from serving 20,584 clients in FFY 2007 to 29,679 in FFY 2014, which is a 44.18 percent increase.
- Inadequate staff coverage to meet the needs of clients — Between FFY 2007 and FFY 2014, the client-to-counselor ratio increased from 176:1 to 221:1.
- Increased expenditures — From FFY 2007 to FFY 2014, client expenditures increased approximately 49 percent due to both the increased number of clients served and increases in the cost of services such as diagnostic, medical, restoration and training services.

As of FFY-22, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to operate under an Order of Selection and anticipates the need to continue. Category 1 (MSD) and Category 2 (SD) are open for services without delay, while individuals classified in Category 3 (D) continue to be placed on a wait list, before being released into eligible status. The current wait for services is 30 days or less. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will need to continue to operate under an order based on an ongoing assessment of available fiscal and staff resources to serve eligible individuals.

## C. The service and outcome goals

Currently, all clients determined eligible and classified in Category 1 (MSD) and Category 2 (SD) are able to develop individualized plans for employment, receive services, and work towards an outcome of competitive and integrated employment.

- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates serving between 6,311 - 6,611 individuals in Category 1 (MSD) at an annual cost of \$6,341,000 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates these individuals will obtain their goals and objectives between 3 to 4 years. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's annual estimate of successful employment outcomes is 689 Category 1 (MSD) clients.
- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates serving between 9,212 - 9651 individuals in Category 2 (SD) at an annual cost of \$9,256,500 the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates these individuals will obtain their goals and objectives

between 2 to 3 years. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's annual estimate of successful employment outcomes is 1,006 for (SD) clients.

Clients classified in Category 3 (D) are placed on a waitlist for services after being determined eligible for services. After release from the waitlist, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates serving between 1,395 - 1,462 Category 3 clients. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates a \$1,402,500 annual cost, with 1 to 2 years to complete goals and objectives. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation annual estimate of successful employment outcomes is 156 Category 3 (D) Clients.

**D. Time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order; and**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates the following time frame for eligible individuals in each category to achieve their goals:

- Individuals in Category 1 (MSD) will achieve their goals within 3 to 4 years.
- Individuals in Category 2 (SD) will achieve their goals within 2 to 3 years.
- Individuals in Category 3 (D) will achieve their goals in 2 years or less, after being released from the waitlist. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation estimates up to 635 new eligible individuals will be placed on the waitlist each year.

**E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities**

Effective when all required approvals are in place and when management deems necessary, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will close all categories and place all eligible individuals not in plan on a waiting list. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will also place all subsequent applicants who are determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services on the waiting list. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will only provide services to eligible individuals who currently have an IPE and for whom services have been initiated. As resources become available individuals will be taken off of the waiting list in chronological order based on priority category and application date. Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities (MSD) will be the first category served.

**2. If the designated State unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will explore the options and impact related to serving eligible individuals (whether or not the individuals are receiving vocational rehabilitation services under the order of selection) who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will use exploratory findings to determine if the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will elect to serve eligible individuals who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment outside of the order of selection wait list. Based on this decision and if necessary, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will develop a policy that reflects the decision

**n. Goals and Plans for Distribution of title VI Funds**

**1. Specify the State's goals and priorities for funds received under section 603 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has set a goal to serve 1,092 individuals with Title VI funds through supported employment services during FFY-23 and 1,1146 individuals during FFY-23. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation expects to receive \$300,000 annually in Title VI Supported Employment Funds. Half of the \$300,000 Title VI funds will be reserved for supported employment services to youth with disabilities. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation reserves SE funds for clients who have been determined most significantly disabled and who have secured an extended support agency for long-term SE support. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has partnered with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to provide and transfer funding and support for mutual clients. Though these are the primary agencies that the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with for SE, there are other individual supports that may qualify as an extended support agency as provided for in policy.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities , in partnership with the Utah Legislature, seek annual ongoing funding for the Support Work Independence (SWI) program. This program provides state-funded supported employment supports for individuals who have accessed the vocational rehabilitation program and are on the waiting list for the Division of Services for People with Disabilities long-term supports. When the client is working successfully and is ready to transfer to the Division of Services for People with Disabilities for long-term support, state funds are utilized for SE while the individual remains on the waiting list for other waiver supports. The Utah State Board of Education also partners with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities for long-term SE for clients who are receiving waiver services from the Division of Services for People with Disabilities . These individuals are provided with long-term SE as well as the other designated living support.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with DSAMH with the Individual Placement Services (IPS) model to support local mental-health agencies with training and technical assistance to provide supported employment services. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and DSAMH are partnering to provide supported employment and extended support to individuals with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI). Through the support and direction of DSAMH, the local mental health agencies partner with the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation to provide the necessary treatment and employment support necessary for individual success. Supported employment is growing for mental health agencies; therefore, many projects are in progress across the state. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is providing guidance on policy, milestone payments and facility requirements in order to partner with each project and local mental-health agency.

2. Describe the activities to be conducted, with funds reserved pursuant to section 603(d), for youth with the most significant disabilities, including:

A. The provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to set aside 50% of SE funds to be used for youth with most significant disabilities ages 14-24 who are in need of supported employment services. In order to qualify for use of these funds, the individual must be classified as someone with a most significant disability, require ongoing and extended services to maintain employment, and be between the ages of 14-24. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation supports these individuals to seek and secure access to an extended services provider (DSPD, DSAMH, natural support, etc.). The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's information management system is programmed to expend youth SE funds and adult SE funds based on the individual's age, employment status, and service provided.



This allows the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation to capture and accurately report expenditures for adult SE and youth SE services

As laws, agencies, and federal guidance change, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is committed to amending and updating policies to provide SE services to both adults and youth as appropriate. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to develop and expand resources for three supported employment pathways including Individual Placement and Support, Customized Employment, and Traditional Supported Employment which lead to long term placement services through partnership with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities , Utah State Board of Education, DSAMH, and the Workforce Development Division.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to partner with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities , Utah State Board of Education, Workforce Development Division and USU on the school-to-work project. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is partnering with Local Mental Health Authorities and DSAMH to provide and expand supported employment services for youth and adults with severe and persistent mental illness, specifically with the IPS model. Through Customized Employment/Supported Employment, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is also providing services and support for individuals with most significant disabilities in sheltered workshops earning subminimum wages, who want to participate in integrated and competitive employment and have access to the community. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to develop training for internal staff and external service providers through the Supported Employment Coordinator position and a collaborative partnership with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities and DSAMH.

**B. How the State will leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expanded supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities.**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities , and DSAMH to create pathways for funding, teamwork and identification of community needs in order to provide SE services, including extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities . Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is also working diligently with Workforce Development Division, Utah State Board of Education, and programs under Department of Human Services (DHS), and Corrections to identify all agencies who serve youth and can provide support during extended services including Division of Child and Family Services, Foster and Proctor Care, Youth in Custody, and Juvenile Justice Services. Creating an atmosphere of team support and braided funding through these agencies will increase access to services for all youth, including those with most significant disabilities, and increase post-school outcomes, including employment

## **o. State's Strategies**

Describe the required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the VR and the Supported Employment programs (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act and section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)):

**1. The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities**

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has established policies to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program. To increase access to services and reduce barriers to access of services for both Vocational Rehabilitation and core partners, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been established with state and community partners regarding shared strategies and accessing Vocational Rehabilitation programs. These MOUs include, but are not limited to, Utah State Board of Education, Division of Services for People with Disabilities, community service providers, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, etc. These agreements outline shared visions and methods for coordinating services to be provided in order to increase access to Supported

Employment services and thereby improve outcomes, reduce barriers and increase successful employment opportunities for the state's population of individuals with Disabilities.

The following strategies will be required in order to achieve the goals and priorities that were outlined in Section (1) State Goals and Priorities.

**Goal 1:** Increase awareness, information availability and access to Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services

- **Strategy 1:** Develop and conduct an interagency training to provide Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and educators with cross-training and system mapping.
- **Strategy 2:** Develop new multimedia resources and expand utilization of different platforms to disseminate information to community partners, educators, parents, and students.

**Goal 2:** Expand availability of pre-employment transition services.

- **Strategy 1:** Increase the number of Pre-ETS contract providers to ensure statewide availability and access, including rural areas.
- **Strategy 2:** Enhance capacity for Vocational Rehabilitation staff to provide Pre-ETS services.
- **Strategy 3:** Expand availability of fee-for-service Pre-ETS through CRPs.

**Goal 3:** Improve the quality of services provided by CRPs.

- **Strategy 1:** Revise fee-for-service policy to emphasize quality outcomes for job development and placement services.
- **Strategy 2:** Enhance CRP knowledge and skill to serve targeted disability populations including individuals who are blind, visually impaired and deafblind.
- **Strategy 3:** Provide training and technical assistance to CRPs to address Vocational Rehabilitation-identified training needs.

**Goal 4:** Strengthen collaboration with the Workforce Development Division and Adult Education

- **Strategy 1:** Conduct cross-training with Workforce Development Division and Adult Education staff to improve awareness for services and coordinated case management.
- **Strategy 2:** Improve interagency referral process by participating in the Partner Referral System.

**Goal 5:** Improve access to Vocational Rehabilitation services for minority populations.

- **Strategy 1:** Improve skills of counselors to serve minority populations, or to help minority individuals deal with workplace discrimination; including information and referral services; and resource identification
- **Strategy 2:** Improve outreach to the Asian/ Asian-American population
- **Strategy 3:** Coordination and collaboration with Refugee Services

**Goal 6:** Improve client understanding of benefits and work incentives.

- **Strategy 1:** Develop and disseminate benefits guide for use in Vocational Rehabilitation counseling sessions.
- **Strategy 2:** Enhance Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor knowledge and understanding of work incentives and benefits planning resources.

**Goal 7:** Expanding Services to Employers

- **Strategy 1:** Increase employer access to resources and education on Accommodations and hiring PWD
- **Strategy 2:** Improve employer connection to individuals with disabilities by expanding employer supported training options.

**Goal 8:** Increase Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and client access to Career Assessment Resources

- **Strategy 1:** Develop and implement a policy establishing a fee-for-service for vocational evaluations and career assessments.
- **Strategy 2:** Provide Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors with ongoing training to increase the utilization of available resources including The Career Index +

**Goal 9:** Improve Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and client access to financial literacy and life skills training.

- **Strategy 1:** Identify and connect clients to community resources that increase financial literacy and life skills.

**Goal 10:** Improve the quality and quantity of Supported Employment Services including customized employment.

- **Strategy 1:** Revise the policy and procedures for Supported Employment and Customized Employment.
- **Strategy 2:** Provide outreach and training to CRP's and other partners to increase the number of Customized Employment Providers.

**Goal 11:** Increase Vocational Rehabilitation performance on WIOA performance accountability measures.

- **Strategy 1:** Increase data sharing with partners to improve outcome tracking.

- **Strategy 2:** Increase Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor knowledge and understanding of career pathways and post-secondary training opportunities.
- **Strategy 3:** Develop a policy for tracking and providing services to employers.

## 2. How a broad range of assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process and on a statewide basis

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to make sure that individuals with disabilities are provided appropriate assistive technology (AT). Utah State Office of Rehabilitation utilizes services from the Utah Center for Assistive Technology, UATT, Agrability, and Independent Living Centers to evaluate and recommend assistive technology for clients in various stages of the rehabilitation process. UATT provides students with disabilities with assistive technology and ensures that recommended AT is also available once the student transitions out of high school. The Utah AgrAbility program specializes in accommodations for agricultural employment and is utilized for AT needs of clients who are farmers and ranchers. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also has successfully advocated for many years now for one-time funds from the state legislature to provide Independent Living with money for AT because Utah State Office of Rehabilitation believes clients who receive such technology and become more independent at home are more likely to eventually become clients of the Vocational Rehabilitation system and decide to seek employment. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, Utah System of High Education, UATT, Agrability and the Independent Living Centers continually evaluate the effectiveness of the current service and referral system and make improvements as necessary. New counselors receive presentations about all AT services and providers as well as ongoing training at agency events, open houses etc. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also operates a computer library to provide Vocational Rehabilitation clients with laptops and desktops needed to participate in services and achieve their goals.

## 3. The outreach procedures that will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities, as well as those who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation engages in a tri-annual Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, which surveys statewide needs and deficits in services to all individuals with disabilities. As part of this survey, unserved and underserved populations are identified, and areas of service needs are assessed. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation utilizes this information to inform its continuous improvement process related to outreach and services to those identified as underserved. Ongoing activities include direct-liaison relationships with local Native American tribal organizations, the Veterans Assistance Program, and refugee and immigrant assistance programs. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will leverage coordination and collaboration with WIOA core and required partners to disseminate information about the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation program and to encourage all people with disabilities who are seeking employment to apply for Utah State Office of Rehabilitation services.

Several of the goals/activities listed in section (o)(1) above are specific to outreach and service to individuals who are minorities and who have been identified as unserved or underserved. Activities are also targeted toward individuals with the most significant disabilities; in particular activities related

to improving and expanding the provision of supported employment and customized employment services.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to provide outreach under section 511 of the Rehabilitation Act to individuals working for subminimum wages. This activity targets the population of individuals with the most significant disabilities providing access to information and referral to Vocational Rehabilitation and other support services. Utah has had a reduction in individuals working in subminimum wage jobs from 2016 to 2019. In January of 2016, there were 1626 subminimum wage certificates in use. In July 2019, there were 1294 certificates in use, for a reduction of 332. For 2020 there were 551 certificates with a reduction of 743. This reduction can be attributed in part to the outreach Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has conducted to this minority population.

4. The methods to be used to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities, including the coordination of services designed to facilitate the transition of such students from school to postsecondary life (including the receipt of VR services, postsecondary education, employment, and pre-employment transition services)

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to expand options to provide transition services and pre-employment services to youth and students with disabilities throughout the state. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation delivers these services via three avenues: services provided by Utah State Office of Rehabilitation employees, fee for service, and contracting. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides transition and pre-employment transition services using internal resources through Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and Guidance provided by Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and support services provided by the Pre-ETs Instructors. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also maintains a fee for service model for transition and pre-employment transition services. The fee schedule allows eligible students and youth with disabilities to exercise informed choice when selecting the type of service and service provider for transition and pre-employment transition services. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also contracts with CRPs, education institutions, and independent living centers to provide pre-employment transition services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has a dedicated Transition Coordinator and Pre-Employment Transition Specialist who are responsible for improving the quality and consistency of transition services and Pre-Employment Transition Services across the state. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains policies and procedures to guide Vocational Rehabilitation staff and providers of Pre-Employment Transition Services. Under the policy, each Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and staff are assigned to work with specific high schools to assist students with the transition to post secondary life. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to expand the options for receiving transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services in Utah. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has three strategies for expanding Vocational Rehabilitation services to students with disabilities:

- Increase the number of Pre-ETS contract providers to ensure statewide availability and access, including rural areas.
- Enhance capacity for Vocational Rehabilitation staff to provide Pre-ETS services.

- Expand availability of fee-for-service Pre-ETS through CRPs.

Each district office maintains specific counselors as liaisons with local public and private schools. Vocational Rehabilitation counselors service individual students by meeting with their IEP teams and in specific Vocational Rehabilitation meetings with students and their parents. Vocational Rehabilitation continues to expand the provision of Job-Readiness Workshops to schools including charter and private schools. The Job-Readiness Workshops train students on aspects of self-discovery, job-readiness, job-seeking and job-keeping skills.

## 5. If applicable, plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the State

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is implementing a project to improve Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) provider services in the state of Utah. The primary goal of this project is to improve the quality of services, rate of placement, consistency in service provision, strengthen client-counselor-CRP communication and collaboration, and support long-term capacity building. Key strategies and initiatives include:

- Revising CRP service policies and procedures
- Standardizing CRP forms for assessments and progress reporting
- Revising CRP provider agreements
- Defining expectations for reporting and updates
- Revising standards for successful employment placements
- Updating the fee-for-service rates and schedule
- Incentivizing placements in rural areas, and high quality employment, such as jobs with benefits, in the STEM field and high paying wages.
- Implementing the position of the Employment Support Services Program Specialist to assist with provider monitoring, support and technical assistance
- Contracting with Utah State University to provide technical assistance and training to employment specialists and job coaches

## 6. Strategies to improve the performance of the State with respect to the performance accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will work with WIOA core partners to develop and monitor appropriate and relevant performance indicators, including those identified under Section 116 of WIOA. These will reflect the new, improved and expanded services of Utah State Office of Rehabilitation including services to employers. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation plans to improve its performance on the accountability measures under section 116 of WIOA by:

- Expanding data sharing capabilities with WIOA core and required programs to increase the accuracy of reporting.

- Increasing Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor knowledge and understanding of career pathways and post-secondary training opportunities to target performance on measurable skill gains and credential attainment.
- Developing a policy for tracking and providing services to employers.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will continue to collect and analyze available baseline data in order to identify areas for improvement and timely strategies to enhance performance.

## 7. Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce development system in assisting individuals with disabilities

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will continue participation in American Job Centers (AJC) throughout the state to collaborate and coordinate services to individuals with disabilities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation accomplishes this by

- Participating in the Partner Referral System to connect individuals with disabilities with local core and required partners. This will allow the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation to track referrals and improve service coordination at the local and state level.
- Coordinating with local core and required partners in AJC partner meetings. At these meetings, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will provide disability training for core and required partners including topics such as disability etiquette, ADA accommodations and accessibility, and providing disability-specific support to individuals
- Maintaining representation on all SWDB committees and subcommittees to ensure individuals with disabilities have physical and programmatic access to WIOA core and required programs.
- Utilizing Work Incentives Planning and Assistance grant to provide benefits counseling to individuals with disabilities served by core and required WIOA partners.
- Partnering with the Workforce Development Division to provide coordinated services and support to youth and students with disabilities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Workforce Development Division are involved in a project called the "School to Work project" to assist students with the most significant disabilities to access competitive, integrated jobs before they transition out of the school system. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and Workforce Development Division specifically blend and braid funding in this project to support students on internships to help students gain work experience prior to job placement.

## 8. How the agency's strategies will be used to:

### A. Achieve goals and priorities by the State, consistent with the comprehensive needs assessment;

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will conduct regular tracking of the progress toward meeting its priorities and goals as identified in Description (I) — State Goals and Priorities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will ensure that all of its goals, priorities and strategies are based on a statewide, comprehensive assessment, detailing both current and future needs. This strategy will be supported through ongoing program evaluation and client feedback.

## B. Support innovation and expansion activities; and

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's strategies to support innovation and expansion activities have been outlined above in section (o)(1). Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will utilize client and stakeholder feedback to identify service gaps, which then will be used to plan and support innovation and expansion activities.

## C. Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services Program and the State Supported Employment Services Program.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is a partner in Employment First legislation to increase access and eliminate disparities in access to state Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Supported Employment. Employment is the first and preferred option for individuals with disabilities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities to ensure that supports are in place for individuals with intellectual disabilities, youth in post-high programs, and all individuals who are MSD and need customized or supported employment supports. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and the Division of Services for People with Disabilities collaborate to provide supported employment services to individuals on the Division of Services for People with Disabilities waiting list through the provision of long-term funding from the Utah State Legislature. This partnership is a key initiative to eliminate systemic barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to seek out opportunities to support individuals with disabilities in competitive integrated employment. Additionally, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation believes alignment with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services's new Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS) settings rule will increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment opportunities. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will continue to provide outreach and opportunities for individuals experiencing sheltered work or segregated day programs and subminimum wages to access Vocational Rehabilitation services in order to increase competitive integrated employment.

In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health to assist individuals with primary diagnoses of substance abuse and mental illness access supported employment outcomes. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation partners with DSAMH in growing the supported employment model, Individualized Placement and Support, in Utah. IPS sites provide competitive, integrated employment opportunities and long term support for individuals with substance abuse and mental health disabilities.

## p. Evaluation and Reports of Progress: VR and Supported Employment Goals

Describe:

1. An evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals described in the approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan for the most recently completed program year were achieved. The evaluation must:



The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), is confident about the progress made towards accomplishing goals and priorities established in FY20. Any challenges and barriers will be noted in the following section.

**Goal:** Increase awareness, information availability, and access to Transition and Pre-Employment Transition Services

- **Progress:** The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to partner with the Utah State Board of Education through the yearly offered Transition Institute. This event was held virtually with asynchronous and synchronous sessions. Content sessions on Pre-ETS, Transition, Interagency Collaboration, and Career and Technical Education partnerships will be offered. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation leadership continued hosting monthly "Transition Learning Sessions" for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Counseling Supervisors, District Directors, and Pre-ETS Instructors to provide opportunities to learn about Transition and Pre-ETS best practices as well as share ideas from the field.

**Goal:** Expand availability of pre-employment transition services.

- **Progress:** The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation released a new RFGA in 2021 to continue the service contracts offered for Pre-ETS services and programs around the state. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has 8 Pre-ETS Contracts for the 2021-2024 federal fiscal year from that RFGA. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation increased the number of Pre-ETS Instructors from 5 to 11 in 2021. Each Vocational Rehabilitation District office now has 1 Pre-ETS Instructor, with the exception of the Eastern District, which has 2 Instructors due to large geographic coverage. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation leadership hosted a Pre-ETS training for supervisors and directors in September 2021 to increase knowledge and implementation of Pre-ETS. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided training to CRPs on the Work Based Learning Experience and Temporary Work Experience milestones in an effort to expand capacity. Pre-ETS Instructors began a new partnership with Choose To Work Specialists to assist with connecting students with summer work-based learning experiences.

**Goal:** Improve the quality of services provided by Community Rehabilitation Providers(CRPs)

- **Progress:** The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation began contracting with Utah State University in October 2020 to provide Customized Employment Training and Technical Assistance in-state. Three cohorts of Employment Specialists were provided with training over the course of the last FFY. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation began partnering with Utah State University and Utah Schools for Deaf/Blind in September 2021 to create a new School to Work site, which will provide CE to students who are deaf-blind to help with competitive and integrated employment outcomes. CRPs will be offered Customized Employment and dual-sensory loss specific training to assist this target population with employment outcomes.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to contract with Utah State University to offer Workplace Supports Training and Technical assistance. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has been hosting monthly CRP meetings to address concerns as well as training needs. Utah State University offers "Community of Practice" events and continuing education training sessions in addition to the Work Support Training.

**Goal:** Improve access to Vocational Rehabilitation services for minority populations.

- **Progress:** Counselors and staff continue to have opportunities to develop cultural competence through training, including Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Native Americans and Disability Experience, and LGBTQ & Disability Intersecting Identities
- Outreach to the Asian American population has increased in several areas. Vocational Rehabilitation district offices connected with local community partners and Asian-American associations to provide an overview of Vocational Rehabilitation services and develop referrals.

**Goal:** Improve client understanding of benefits and work incentives.

- **Progress:** Information brochures were developed for clients to provide an overview of SSI/SSDI benefits, work incentive options, and earning thresholds. These brochures were distributed to clients and also made available on the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation website. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation staff received updated training on work incentives.

**Goal:** Expanding Services to Employers

- **Progress:** To meet the needs of Utah businesses during the pandemic and to support their ability to hire and retain individuals with disabilities, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation enhanced and expanded its employer services. Program enhancements included moving all of its Choose to Work Employment Specialists under the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Business Relations Team, providing them intensive training on disability, accommodations and employment placement strategies, and transitioning the team into a specialized employer services tracking system. As a result, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Business Relations team increased the number of employers served and increased the number of individualized services provided. These employer services include employer training and technical assistance, providing information and resources on financial support to hire individuals with disabilities, recruitment and placement support, and facilitating on-the-job training opportunities. In addition, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation transitioned to providing employer workshops, training, and hiring events in a virtual format. In addition to meeting the COVID safety standards during the pandemic, this format allowed for greater statewide employer attendance.

**Goal:** Increase Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and client access to Career Assessment Resources

- **Progress:** Counselors have access to vocational assessments. Additional fee-for-service evaluations will need to be identified and policy established for vocational and career assessments.
- Counselors continue to have access to the Career Index Plus Training curriculum through the DWS Agency Learning Portal. Current or new staff have access to review training sessions when needed. This is also presented in Basic Counselor Orientation Training as part of new staff onboarding.

**Goal:** Improve Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and client access to financial literacy and life skills training.

- **Progress:** A new Financial Literacy Curriculum that clients can access through CRP's has been developed. Vocational Rehabilitation refers clients and youth with disabilities to the training and authorizing payment for the financial literacy curriculum that includes modules for engaging in banking services, budgeting, residential finance needs, and managing credit.

**Goal:** Increase Vocational Rehabilitation performance on WIOA performance accountability measures.

- **Progress:** During the last two years, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided additional training and guidance to staff on common performance measures. The goal of these training sessions was to increase their knowledge and understanding of performance measures, how to support clients in achieving quality outcomes in these areas, and how to coordinate with clients, partners, and vendors to obtain required documentation for reporting. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also established internal controls for validating educational goals and skill gains, along with developing counselor dashboards to help field staff track their progress. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also revised Training Services policies and provided training to increase staff knowledge of career pathways, apprenticeships, and other post-secondary training opportunities. And lastly, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation developed policies and procedures for its Business Relations Team to track and report services provided to employees. Supporting activities included training for all business relations staff and a specialized tracking dashboard to monitor progress and performance with employer services.

## B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation made great progress towards achieving all identified goals and priorities. However, challenges were encountered during this progress, which included:

- The Covid-19 pandemic presented several challenges in making progress with the defined goals and priorities. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation needed to shift its priorities and resources in order to maintain staff safety and ensure continuity of services for clients. The pandemic and its related economic impact also affected progress with joint partner initiatives, due to similar reprioritization and staffing shortages. However, despite these challenges, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation was able to re-engage with its goals, adjust its strategies and make significant progress, as noted in the previous section.

## 2. An evaluation of the extent to which the Supported Employment program goals described in the Supported Employment Supplement for the most recent program year were achieved. The evaluation must:

### A. Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation, in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), is confident about the progress made towards accomplishing Supported Employment goals and priorities established in FY20. Any challenges and barriers will be noted in the following section.

**Goal 1:** Improve the quality and quantity of Supported Employment Services including customized employment.

- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provided Supported Employment (SE) services to 927 clients in FY20 and 1,040 clients in FY21. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation successfully rehabilitated 151 clients in supported employment for FY20 and 237 in FY21. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation attributes its success to its continued partnership with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities, DSAMH, and Utah State Board of Education, section 511 outreach to 14(c) employers, setting high standards for CRPs, and internal continuous improvement efforts. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation coordinates services with agencies with mutual goals of competitive, integrated employment and who provide extended services such as the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) to provide a smooth transition from short-term funding through Vocational Rehabilitation to extended services.
- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation revised policies and procedures for supported employment and customized employment services. These policy revisions included developing new provider agreements, standardizing client reporting and progress forms, and providing training to staff and providers on the changes.
- Utah State Office of Rehabilitation began contracting with Utah State University in October 2020 to provide Customized Employment Training and Technical Assistance in-state. The purpose of this collaboration was to increase the number of statewide CE providers, while providing training and support. Utah State University offered 3 CE trainings over the course of the last year and provided CE training to 15 Employment Specialists, which assisted in increasing capacity for CE in Utah. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation marketed the training during the monthly CRP meetings and through sending out information on the listserv. In addition, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation developed new outreach CE materials and resources for staff and clients.

**Goal 2:** Improve the quality of services provided by Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs).

- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation revised and released the Supported Job Based and Supported Employment fee schedule in January of 2020. With the revisions, Utah State Office of Rehabilitation created "high quality indicators," which provide milestone payments to CRPs for quality outcomes. The goal of these policy revisions is to ensure consistent, quality service provision, along with directing providers to help clients achieve employment outcomes with higher wages, benefits, and natural support. Other considerations included decreasing the time from the start of job development to placement, and directing resources to support rural area employment placements.
- In FY20, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation began contracting with Utah State University to offer Workplace Supports Training, continuing education, and technical assistance for CRPs providing job coaching services. The Employment Support Services Specialist has been working collaboratively with Utah State University to provide technical assistance to CRPs. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation increased meeting frequency with CRPs to provide training and address questions and concerns more frequently.

- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation continues to coordinate with Utah State University to provide training to CRPs on working with targeted disability populations. In addition, training on working with different disability types was conducted by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Business Relations Team and offered to CRPs. Next, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation began partnering with Utah State University and Utah Schools for Deaf and Blind (USDB) in September 2021 to create a new School-to-Work site, which will provide customized employment to students who are deaf-blind to help with competitive and integrated employment outcomes. CRPs will be offered Customized Employment and dual-sensory loss specific training to assist this target population with employment outcomes. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation is a partner in the School-to-Work site that began at the USDB in September 2021. The new school-to-work initiative will provide opportunities for students with disabilities who are deaf-blind to access customized employment services.

#### B. Describe the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities

Although the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation made great progress with its goals related to supportive and employment services, here are the key challenges and barriers:

- Employee retention with the Community Rehabilitation Programs continues to present challenges with provider expansion and client service delivery.
- As noted in the previous section, the COVID-19 pandemic also presented challenges to SE services. Many SE clients have high-risk health issues, which cause them to delay or postpone job service and employment. In addition, many SE clients lost employment due to the impact of the pandemic. Also, many providers experienced pandemic-related staffing issues, along with transitioning to virtual service delivery in a manner that would appropriately meet the needs of SE clients.

#### 3. The VR program's performance on the performance accountability indicators under section 116 of WIOA

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation will continue to submit performance data as it becomes available for measurable skill gains, measures of employment in the 2nd and 4th quarter, median wages in the 2nd quarter, and Credential Attainment one year after program exit. Utah's performance numbers in PY-19 and PY-20 are as follows:

	<b>Employment 2nd Quarter</b>	<b>Employment 4th Quarter</b>	<b>Median Wages</b>	<b>Credential Attainment</b>	<b>Measurable Skill Gain</b>
<b>PY-19</b>	55.4%	51.9%	\$3,713	3.3%	42.9%
<b>PY-20</b>	50.9%	48.6%	\$3,989	29.9%	51.6%

#### 4. How the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation has engaged in the following innovation and expansion projects and activities:

- Funding of the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation Transition and Supported Employment Coordinator and Program Specialist to increase the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services to youth with disabilities, specifically those with the most significant disabilities and expansion of transition and pre-employment transition services for students with disabilities.
- Implementation of statewide Pre-Employment Transition Services contracts to serve eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, including contracts targeting students with sensory impairments.
- Development and implementation of new contracts to provide training and technical assistance to Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) providers to ensure the provision of high-quality job development, placement and coaching services, along with increasing the number of Customized Employment Providers.
- Providing funding to support a School-to-Work Customized Employment Project with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and three local school districts to develop competitive, integrated, and meaningful employment for students with developmental disabilities, specifically students who are at-risk of entering into sheltered work settings at subminimum wages once exiting high school.
- The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation provides annual funding support for the operation of the Utah State Independent Living Council.
- Administrative support and direct expenses for operation of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) were also provided by the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation. These funding arrangements are consistent with 34 CFR 361.35.

## q. Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

Include the following:

1. The quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities

**Quality:** Utah State Office of Rehabilitation maintains high quality in supported employment services by establishing and applying SE program standards for Utah State Office of Rehabilitation SE vendors. These standards prescribe minimum customer outcomes and identify program procedures that must be followed for a provider to receive funds. A newly implemented quality assurance checklist for provider reviews every two years requires certifications, continuing education requirements, consumer satisfaction, review of complaints and concerns, and an action plan for continuing services for Utah State Office of Rehabilitation.

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation created specific policy based on the provision of supported employment services. The main service provided under SE is job coaching. Utah State Office of Rehabilitation requires all employment specialists to be trained and have certifications prior to providing services to SE clients. Employment specialists from providers who do not meet the minimum qualifications cannot work with Vocational Rehabilitation clients. The monitoring of SE service providers is conducted by the SE Coordinator and the Employment Support Services Program Specialist. This monitoring is conducted by assessing the application of Utah State Office of

Rehabilitation program standards and outcomes. It includes a review of any complaints received and the results of surveys completed by counselors using the program for clients. The coordinator and program specialist also review current providers, create updates, standardized expectations, revise provider agreements, and provide technical assistance.

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation also partners with extended support agencies to train and set expectations for employment specialists in customized employment, discovery, and Individualized Placement Services (IPS). These services have been proven to meet the needs of persons with most significant disabilities (MSDs) who may need additional services and long-term support in order to be successfully employed.

**Scope:** SE services are provided with Title VI, Part B funds on a fee-for-service basis (based on achievement of milestones) by SE service providers, including functional assessment of clients to perform in supported employment (supplemental to the assessment conducted by the counselor for purposes of establishing eligibility with Title I funds); life-skills training, job development, job analysis and client job matching; training by an employment specialist in job skills and behavioral expectations at the job site; training and support away from the job to ensure work performance; family support; and support to the employer to ensure client job retention. The same scope of services is provided by the extended service agency. Target populations in supported employment include persons with the most significant disabilities who qualify for ongoing support from the Division of Services for Persons with Disabilities (DSPD) or the Division of Mental Health (DMH), or individuals who have ongoing support available from other sources, including private, Social Security and/or natural supports.

**Extent:** SE services are provided to eligible individuals according to their needs. Services are provided for a period not to exceed 24 months unless under special circumstances a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been jointly agreed to by the individual and the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor and established in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). SE services may be provided to students with disabilities in the school system as a part of a team with the school, extended services agency, Vocational Rehabilitation, family etc.

## 2. The timing of transition to extended services

The transition of services from Vocational Rehabilitation to the extended support service agency depends on the customer's needs and level of support. VR can provide long-term extended support on the job and employment specialist job coaching for up to 24 months or until the customer reaches an 80/20 level of intervention support. The 80/20 level of support is defined as needing less than 20 percent intervention by the employment specialist to successfully complete job tasks. For example, if a client is working 20 hours each week, the employment specialist would be intervening with job support for four hours or less each week.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor is required to maintain communication with the Supported Employment (SE) team at least every 30 days. The SE team includes the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor, customer, family members, extended services agency representative (i.e., support coordinator, mental-health worker, etc.), teacher (if a student), and employment specialist or employer. The team will coordinate services by braiding funding to ensure the client has the support needed to be successful on the job. Once the client reaches an 80/20 level of support or 24 months (whichever comes first) and the team agrees, services and funding will be transferred to the identified extended services agency for long-term SE.

For youth and students with disabilities who qualify and need supported employment services, the transition to the extended services agency will occur when the client has graduated or aged out of the school system. The adult services agencies will continue to partner, braid funding and coordinate the transition of responsibility as appropriate.

## Vocational Rehabilitation (Combined or General) Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that:

1. The (enter the name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate,) is authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA[14], and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act[15];

Enter the name of designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate

Utah State Office of Rehabilitation

2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, the (enter the name of designated State agency)[16] agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[17], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[18], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;

Enter the name of designated State agency

Utah Department of Workforce Services

3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan[19], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations[20], policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;

4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;



5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.

6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.

7. The (enter the name of authorized representative below) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;

Enter the name of authorized representative below

Sarah Brenna

8. The (enter the title of authorized representative below) has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;

Enter the title of authorized representative below

Division Director

9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

#### Footnotes

[14] Public Law 113-128.

[15] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

[16] All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[17] No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[18] Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.

[19] No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[20] Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

Certification Signature

Signatory information

Enter Signatory information in this column

Name of Signatory

Sarah Brenna

Title of Signatory

Division Director

Date Signed

February 28, 2020

## Assurances

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances: **The State Plan must provide assurances that:**

The State Plan must include

Include

1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures: The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.

2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement: The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.

3. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to: Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:

3.a. The establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act

3.b. The establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (A or B must be selected):

3.b.(A) "is an independent State commission" (Yes/No)

No

- 3.b.(B) "has established a State Rehabilitation Council" (Yes/No) Yes
- 3.c. Consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 3.d. The financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3)
- 3.e. The local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds (Yes/No)
- 3.f. The shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs (Yes/No) Yes
- 3.g. Statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan No
- 3.h. The descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 3.i. All required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 3.j. The requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 3.k. The compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 3.l. The reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities
- 3.m. The submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act
4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

- 4.a. Comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.b. Impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.c. Provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as Yes appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)
- 4.d. Determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.e. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.f. Comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.g. Provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.h. Comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act
- 4.i. Meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
- 4.j. With respect to students with disabilities, the State,
- 4.j.i. Has developed and will implement,
- 4.j.i.I. Strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and
- 4.j.i.II. Strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and
- 4.j.ii. Has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25))

5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

5.a. The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act

5.b. The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act

5.c. The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act

6. Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

6.a. The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act

6.b. The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act

7. Provision of Supported Employment Services: Yes

7.a. The Designated State Agency Assures That it Will Provide Supported Employment Services as Defined in Section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act

7.b. The designated State agency assures that:

7.b.i. The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act

7.b.ii. An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act

## **Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Combined or General) Performance Indicators**

### **Performance Goals for the Core Programs**

Each state submitting a Unified or Combined State Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The state is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, on state-negotiated levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two years of the plan.

For Program Year (PY) 2016-2019 plans, the Departments used the transition authority under section 503(a) of WIOA to designate certain primary indicators of performance as “baseline” indicators to ensure an orderly transition from the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to those under WIOA. A “baseline” indicator was one for which states did not propose an expected level of performance and did not come to agreement with the Departments on negotiated levels of performance because sufficient data was not available to establish such performance levels. As a result, “baseline” indicators were not used in the end of the year adjustment of performance levels and were not used to determine failure to meet adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The Departments designated indicators as “baseline” based on the likelihood of a State having insufficient data with which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance.

For PYs 2020-2023 Plans, Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and the Title II program (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act) will have two full years of data available to make reasonable determinations of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Credential Attainment Rate; and
- Measurable Skill Gains

The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program, authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by title III of WIOA, will have two full years of data available to make a reasonable determination of expected levels of performance for the following indicators for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit); and
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)

The Credential Attainment Rate and Measurable Skill Gains indicators do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program; therefore, this program will not submit expected levels of performance for these indicators.

For the first two years of PYs 2020-2023 Plans, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by title IV of WIOA, will have two full years of data available for the Measurable Skill Gains indicator only. Therefore, the Departments will designate the following indicators as “baseline” for the VR program for PY 2020 and PY 2021:

- Employment (Second Quarter after Exit);
- Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit);
- Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit); and
- Credential Attainment Rate

VR agencies must continue to collect and report on all indicators, including those that have been designated as “baseline, pursuant to section 116(d) of WIOA.” The actual performance data reported by these programs for indicators designated as “baseline” for PY 2020 and PY 2021 will serve as baseline data in future years. The Departments will require VR agencies to submit expected levels of performance for these indicators for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

Each core program must submit an expected level of performance for all of the other indicators, as applicable, with the exception of the four indicators designated as “baseline” for the VR program in PY 2020 and PY 2021. The Departments will work with states during the negotiation process to establish negotiated levels of performance for each of the primary indicators for the core programs not listed as “baseline.” Each state must update its plan to include the agreed-upon negotiated levels of performance before the Departments approve a state’s plan.

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020 Negotiated Level	PY 2021 Expected Level	PY 2021 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline

Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skill Gains	41.8%	42.9%	41.8%	51.6%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

*“Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.*

## VII. Program-Specific Requirements for Combined State Plan Partner Programs

States choosing to submit a Combined State Plan must provide information concerning the six core programs—the Adult program, Dislocated Worker program, Youth program, Wagner-Peyser Act program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, and the Vocational Rehabilitation program—and also submit relevant information for any of the eleven partner programs it elects to include in its Combined State Plan. When a State includes a Combined State Plan partner program in its Combined State Plan, it need not submit a separate plan or application for that particular program. 24 If included, Combined State Plan partner programs are subject to the “common planning elements” in Sections II-IV of this document, where specified, as well as the program-specific requirements for that program.

[24] States that elect to include employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) under a Combined State Plan would submit all other required elements of a complete CSBG State Plan directly to the Federal agency that administers the program. Similarly, States that elect to include employment and training activities carried by the Department of Housing and Urban Development would submit all other required elements of a complete State Plan for those programs directly to the Federal agency that administers the program.

## Performance Indicator Appendix

### All WIOA Core Programs

The Departments determined that the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator will be measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs within each state to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. The Departments will continue piloting approaches for measuring this indicator for the first two years of PY 2020-2023 plans. Therefore, states are not required to submit an expected level of performance for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021. However, core programs are expected to collect data and report on this indicator for PY 2020 and PY 2021 as they did for PYs 2016-2019 plans.

All WIOA Core Programs



Performance Indicators	PY 2020 Expected Level	PY 2020	PY 2021 Expected	PY 2021
		Negotiated Level	Level	Negotiated Level
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Effectiveness in Serving Employers” is still being piloted and this data will not be entered for 2020 State Plans.

## Additional Indicators of Performance

States may identify additional indicators in the plan, including additional approaches to measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers, and may establish levels of performance for each of the state indicators. Please identify any such state indicators under Additional Indicators of Performance.

Utah has not identified additional indicators.